Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. April 1886.

CONFIDENTIAL.

(5242.)

F.O.
424

142

PART IX.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

IN THE

ASIATIC PROVINCES OF TURKEY.

1885.

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Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. July 1885.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Administrative Reforms in the Asiatic Provinces of Turkey.

Part IX.

No. 1.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received January* 1, 1885.)

(No. 493.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 26, 1884.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 481 of the 19th instant, I have the honour to transmit a despatch from Mr. Henderson, giving a further account of the arbitrary proceedings of the Vali of Aleppo.

I understand that the Porte has quite recently sent a Mazbata to the Sultan, recommending His Majesty to recall him; but his Excellency's influence at the Palace is, I fear, still sufficiently powerful to counteract any suggestions of the Ministers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Consul Henderson to Mr. Wyndham.

Sir, *Aleppo, December* 5, 1884.

I HAD the honour to inform your Excellency, by telegram, of the extraordinary relations which have for some time existed between the Vali and the Heads of Departments of this vilayet.

For many months there has been much discontent and irritation at the Vali's arbitrary and unjustifiable conduct. He has monopolized the whole administration of the different Departments, not even excepting the judicial branch of the Local Government, and the immense power thus centred in his hands is manipulated in such a manner as to be as profitable to himself as it is unsatisfactory to others. It appears that the Receiver-General, the Chief of the Gendarmerie, the Procureur-Général, and the Secretary-General refused to sign some Mazbatas legalizing some of his Excellency's extraordinary proceedings—or, at all events, to persuade the Porte of their regularity—and informed the Porte of their reasons for refusing. Conduct so unheard-of, in the opinion of his Excellency, called for retaliation, and charges of the grossest kind were trumped up against them. Mazbatas were drawn up and signed by his pliant and obedient creatures, but they did not produce the desired effect at Constantinople, where, doubtless, such documents from such a quarter are appreciated at their proper value.

The Defterdar's* party prepared a very long indictment against the Vali, accusing him of no less than ninety-eight crimes, and pledging themselves to substantiate with

* Receiver-General.

incontrovertible evidence every one of these accusations. I am told that one copy of this document was sent to the Sultan, one to the Grand Vizier, and another to the Minister of the Interior. When this came to his Excellency's knowledge he surrounded the houses of these four officials with zaptiehs, their letters were seized, and the Secretary-General of the vilayet was subjected to personal violence when he refused to submit.

The Inspector-General of Gendarmerie* was kept a close prisoner in his own house by his own zaptiehs, and the Post and Telegraph authorities were ordered not to transmit either their letters or telegrams. The police office was closed, and the clerk and four policemen who were friends of Shahin Pasha were thrown into prison and flogged.

The Procureur-Général was mobbed by a horde of women of disreputable character, gathered together by Ali Bey, Djemil Pasha's *alter ego*. Zaptiehs invaded his house and threw his furniture into the street, alleging that the proprietor of the house required it for his own occupation. Orders were given by the Vali that no one should rent him a house, and the poor man was obliged to take his family to a most undesirable quarter of the town, where he by hazard found two small rooms. He has just received a telegram from Constantinople, requesting him to proceed there immediately to personally explain the state of affairs in Aleppo.

Great sympathy is felt for these officials, and, with the exception of one or two of the Vali's partners, the whole population is with them in their endeavour to break the power of one of the most cruel and insatiable of Turkish Valis.

The Ministers, I am informed, sent a Mazbata to the Palace demanding Djemil Pasha's dismissal, but the Sultan has not approved this decision, fearing to offend Namyk Pasha, the Vali's father, in whom, it is said, he has great confidence. On the other hand, very great encouragement is given to Djemil Pasha's opponents by the Porte, and from a very influential clique in the Palace itself. The conflict is being waged with unabated activity by both parties, and all public business is at a complete standstill. It is, of course, greatly to be regretted that the Sultan should refuse to listen to the advice of his Ministers in such matters, and the struggle between the Ministers and His Majesty's *entourage* in similar questions does not tend to increase the prestige of the Central Government in the provinces or add to its credit and dignity in Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

No. 2.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received January* 1, 1885.)

(No. 498.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 27, 1884.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, in which he relates the venal manner in which a new Sheikh of the Shamar Arabs has been recently appointed as a striking instance of the manner in which orders from head-quarters are carried out by subordinates in the Ottoman Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Consul Everett to Mr. Wyndham.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, December* 8, 1884.

IN my despatches of the 31st October and 16th November, 1883, respectively, I reported some differences which had occurred in the Sandjak of Mardin between the Arab tribes of Shammar and Anaza.

During my recent journey I met with a young cavalry officer who gave me the following interesting details, which I transmit to you, and which furnish a striking instance of the manner in which orders from head-quarters are carried out by subordinates in this country.

* Shahin Pasha.

His regiment, the 23rd, was ordered from Erzingan to Mardin early in the present year for the purpose of quelling disorders which had arisen by reason of the presence of the Shammars in the latter province. It was commanded by Colonel Reshid Bey. After two or three skirmishes, in which the Arabs were worsted, the Colonel received orders from the Seraskierate to count the flocks and herds of the Shammars, and, collecting the dues, to appoint Ali, the son of the Chief Abdurriza, to be the principal Sheikh.

At the same time he received an order from Sami Pasha, the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Diarbekir, instructing him not to raise any question regarding the rights of pasturage, and to appoint as principal Sheikh Ferhan Pasha.

In this dilemma Reshid Bey determined to obey neither order, but to appoint as Sheikh the highest bidder, or, in other words, the man who would give him the greatest number of mares. Ali, offering one more than any other candidate, was accordingly made Sheikh, and the mare which decided the question was sent to Hassan Tashim Pasha, the Commander of the cavalry at Erzingan, as a present.

In the meantime Sami Pasha made his appearance on the scene, and on his way down from Diarbekir, for a consideration of £ T. 2,000, gave permission to the nomad Kurds to pass to their pasturing grounds in the Bohtan.

Ferhan Pasha at once addressed himself to Sami, complaining that, against his orders, Ali, the son of Abdurriza, had been made Sheikh, whereupon Sami Pasha informed him that, if he would pay him £ T. 1,000 down, he should at once be elevated to the post. Ferhan Pasha immediately sent his son to Bagdad for the money, and handing it over to Sami was then and there appointed.

Having completed this arrangement he collected 88,000 piastres from the Shammar Arabs as a tax on their sheep and camels.

It would be interesting to know how Sami Pasha afterwards arranged matters with the Seraskierate. Their candidate was Ali, and it may be fairly supposed that he knew it, and that having paid dearly for the post to Reshid Bey would afterwards bring a complaint against Sami.

In my opinion, and I believe it is the general one, Sami Pasha only retained a certain portion of the money, and sent the remainder to the officials of the Seraskierate in order to obtain their acquiescence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.

No. 3.

Earl Granville to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 10. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 9, 1885.

I APPROVE the language which you held to Assim Pasha, as reported in your despatch No. 481, Confidential, of the 19th ultimo, with regard to the danger of allowing the Vilayet of Aleppo to fall into a state of anarchy owing to the mal-administration of the Vali, Djemil Pasha.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 4.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received January* 14, 1885.)

(No. 501.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 31, 1884.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel Everett, in which he relates a system of intrigue instituted against a Christian doctor in the Ottoman army, Dr. Yusuf Zekki, by his Mussulman colleagues.

I have communicated verbally to Assim Pasha the substance of Colonel Everett's despatch, adding that I had little doubt but that the despatches on this subject would be laid before Parliament.

His Excellency made no observations in reply.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 4.

Consul Everett to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 55.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, December* 10, 1884.

IN my despatch No. 2, Treaty, of the 26th ultimo I mentioned that, on account of a contemplated act of injustice to a Christian, I returned to Erzeroum by Erzingan, instead of proceeding by the direct route as I had previously intended.

About a year ago an army doctor, by name Yusuf Zekki, a Christian, and a native of Damascus, came to Erzeroum. In addition to his duties at the military hospital, he practised privately, and, performing several remarkable cures, in less than a couple of months found himself with a very large practice. The other doctors of the town, both civil and military, seeing that their clients were fast deserting them, formed a clique against him and resolved to get him sent away.

Among the other military doctors are Salih Effendi (the Head of the hospital) and Issa Effendi, both Mahommedans, and most unprincipled men. By blackening the character of Yusuf Zekki to the authorities, and more especially to Moussa Pasha, the General commanding the troops, they succeeded in persuading them that he was not fit for the work at the military hospital, and obtained their consent to his being transferred to the frontier outposts.

On this occasion General Dennet, the Russian Consul-General, interceded for him with Moussa Pasha, and he was allowed to remain.

Although Dr. Yusuf Zekki had been known to me by reputation, it was not until about this period that I became personally acquainted with him, and I remember being much struck with his pleasant manner and gentlemanly bearing. I have since had occasion to send for him professionally, and have found him to be a skilful and careful physician.

The doctors, foiled in their first attempt, resorted to other means. While the civilians endeavoured to damage his reputation in the city, Salih and Issa denounced him to Moussa as a robber, and, worse still, as a revolutionist. They represented him as in league with, and an agent for, the Armenian Revolutionary Society—and, in fact, altogether too dangerous a man to be left at liberty.

It was therefore arranged that he was to be sent to Erzingan, and there imprisoned (I learnt it afterwards from Moussa Pasha himself); and the Marshal at Erzingan was written to and informed of his character.

The orders arriving for his departure, Dr. Yusuf Zekki informed me of the state of his affairs, and begged me, if possible, to intercede for him. I accordingly commenced making inquiries. I found, in addition to the more serious accusations, a number of reports were in circulation; and, after satisfying myself that the whole of them were false, I called on Moussa Pasha, exposed the entire intrigue, and begged him, instead of listening to the reports which reached him from the other doctors, to make inquiries for himself. My visit was entirely successful. Moussa Pasha declared himself perfectly contented with the explanations I had afforded him, and, summoning Dr. Yusuf Zekki to his presence, apologized for his previous conduct, and declared his intention to regard him henceforward with a more favourable eye. He has since kept his word.

Shortly before I left Erzeroum for Bitlis, Yusuf Zekki sent in an application for leave to pass the winter months at Constantinople, on account of his health. Moussa Pasha forwarded it to head-quarters (Erzingan), for the sanction of the Marshal; but, to his surprise, an answer was returned to the effect that it was sufficient for Yusuf Zekki to proceed for change of air to Erzingan. Such a change was not acceptable to him, for not only would the damp, cold, winter climate of Erzingan have been sure to produce a relapse of his disease (chronic dysentery, contracted at Bagdad), but it was evident that the change from Constantinople to Erzingan had been purposely contrived with the intention of afterwards doing him harm.

The head physician of the central hospital at Erzingan is a Colonel Ahmed Bey, an unprincipled and fanatic Mussulman. On his staff last year there was a certain Colonel Anastas Bey, a Greek, who, by his superior skill, had offended Ahmed Bey much in the same way that Yusuf Zekki offended the Mussulman doctors here. Ahmed Bey and his Mussulman associates trumped up against him a charge of robbery of medical stores, and the unfortunate man was kept a prisoner in a large barrack-room throughout the whole of the severe winter without trial. This summer he was removed to Constantinople under escort, was ultimately acquitted, and,

I am given to understand, died suddenly a few days afterwards, it is believed from poison.

Through a friend at Erzingan Yusuf Zekki learnt that Salih Effendi had written about him privately to Colonel Ahmed Bey, and hence the order to proceed to Erzingan.

About a fortnight afterwards I arrived at Kharput and found letters from Yusuf Zekki detailing the above-mentioned events. Being already acquainted with the Marshal, it appeared to me that I might be as successful with him as I had been previously with Moussa Pasha, and so I decided to go to Erzingan. I am happy to say that I was enabled to take to Erzeroum myself the despatch confirming Dr. Yusuf Zekki's leave to Constantinople. I may add that he would have already proceeded there had it not been that it has taken the Treasury of the vilayet more than a fortnight to pay him by small instalments the sum of £ T. 70 (70 liras), being the arrears of several months' pay.

In a future despatch I purpose bringing to your notice the distressing state of the military hospital, and to furnish you with some examples of the excessive corruption which unfortunately exists in it, and the lamentable ignorance of the doctors.

Here I will only mention that the vindictiveness of the two Mussulman doctors, Major Salih Effendi and Captain Issa Effendi, is beyond anything that can be conceived. Their malice is without limit, and it is a positive fact that Dr. Yusuf Zekki has been compelled to feign that coffee disagrees with him in order to avoid the risk of being poisoned, and to give up visiting patients in the Mussulman quarters at night for fear of assassination.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.

No. 5.

Earl Granville to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 24.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 19, 1885.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 501 of the 31st ultimo, in which you inclose a despatch from Colonel Everett on the subject of intrigues against Yusuf Zekki, a Christian doctor at Erzeroum, and I have to instruct you to inform Colonel Everett that his proceedings in the matter are approved.

I am, &c.

(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 6.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 27.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 20, 1885.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Mr. Henderson, Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, in which he requests authority to charge a sum of 3*l.* per month wages, and 6*l.* for uniform (I presume per annum), for an extra guard to protect Mr. Dermarcarian, who appears to be the object of the Vali's resentment, as reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 480 of the 19th December of last year.

I yesterday brought the Report of the assault on Mr. Chalam to the notice of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and I have to-day addressed a note to his Excellency, copy of which is herewith inclosed, in which I have requested him to send orders to the Vali to take proper steps to insure the safety of Her Majesty's Consul and of the persons employed in Her Majesty's Consulate.

The Porte, as I have already informed your Lordship, is not satisfied with Djemil Pasha's conduct.

I have in the meantime telegraphed to Mr. Henderson to call upon the Vali to protect members of Her Majesty's Consulate, and I have informed him that his

request to charge the expenses of a guard for Mr. Dermarcarian has been referred to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 6.

Consul Henderson to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 59.)
Aleppo, December 17, 1884.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, in original, a Report which has been made to me by Mr. Chalam, one of the employés of this Consulate.

Mr. Dermarcarian, who is at present the object of Djemil Pasha's resentment, resembles Mr. Chalam much in height and build, and at a short distance the one is easily mistaken for the other, and there is, I fear, but too good reason to believe that this attempt was directed against Mr. Dermarcarian, and that he has providentially escaped a fate similar to that which befell the owner of the Arab mare, as reported in Mr. Calvert's No. 39 of the 7th July last.

After the departure of Shahim Pasha, the Chief of Police, the Vali appointed as his substitute an Aleppine named Abderhaman, a man of such notorious character that even the Minister of War, who supports the Vali at the Palace, could not be persuaded to approve of this proceeding, and twice sent peremptory telegraphic orders to the Vali to remove him from all connection with the police.

The Vali has refused to obey these orders, and has appointed fifteen or twenty of this man's companions, who are noted bad characters, to the police force.

The Procureur-Général has also gone to Constantinople, and the President of the First Division of the Civil Court leaves for the same place in a few days. Within the last day or two strong military detachments have occupied all the gates of the town, but the reason for adopting this measure has not been allowed to transpire.

In the present exceptional state of affairs, I have been obliged to employ the services of an extra armed guard for the protection of Mr. Dermarcarian, and I would request authority to charge the expense of doing so in my next quarterly account. My Russian colleague, who is my next-door neighbour, has at present three armed guards, and he never stirs out of doors without being accompanied by two of them armed to the teeth. They receive 3*l.* a month wages and 6*l.* for uniform, and I have given the same allowance to the guard whom I have at present specially employed in the service of the Consulate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 6.

Mr. Chalam to Consul Henderson.

Alep, le 15 *Décembre*, 1884.

M. le Consul,

J'AI l'honneur de vous faire part qu'hier soir à 1 heure à la Turque, en sortant du Consulat pour me rendre chez moi, deux hommes armés déguisés en Kurdes me barrèrent le chemin. Un de ceux-ci me saisit en levant son poignard sur moi, l'autre dit à son camarade: "Laissez-le, ce n'est pas lui." Moi, tout effrayé, j'ai pris la fuite.

Comme il est bien clair que ces hommes visaient la personne de quelqu'un des employés du Consulat, je viens par la présente, M. le Consul, vous faire parvenir ce qui s'est passé.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) M. CHALAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 6.

Mr. Wyndham to Assim Pasha.

Constantinople, January 20, 1885.

M. le Ministre,

HER Majesty's Consul at Aleppo has reported to this Embassy that Mr. Chalam, one of the employés of Her Majesty's Consulate in that town, when leaving the Consulate on his way home on the night of the 14th December last, was attacked by two armed men disguised as Kurds. One of these seized him by the collar and raised his dagger to stab him, but the other prevented the perpetration of the crime by saying, "Leave him alone; he is not the man."

This attack would seem from all appearances to have been directed against Mr. Dermarcarian, First Dragoman of Her Majesty's Consulate at Aleppo.

In calling your Excellency's most serious attention to these facts, I beg you to be so good as to send urgent instructions to the Vali to take the necessary measures for the protection of Her Majesty's Consul, of Mr. Dermarcarian, and of the rest of the employés of Her Majesty's Consulate at Aleppo.

In conclusion, M. le Ministre, I consider it my duty to remind your Excellency that if any harm should befall the staff of Her Majesty's Consulate at Aleppo, the responsibility will rest on the Vali of that province.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 7.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received January* 31.)

(No. 26.)
Constantinople, January 17, 1885.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 460 of the 11th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of two despatches from Mr. Consul Biliotti on the subject of the condition of the Vilayet of Trebizond, in which he reports the departure of Sirri Pasha and the arrival of the new Vali, Aziz Pasha. Your Lordship will observe that Aziz Pasha has assured Mr. Biliotti that he will use his best endeavours to continue to merit the good opinion of Her Majesty's Embassy, and that he expressed a hope that Mr. Biliotti would communicate to him any information which would assist him in carrying out his duties.

I have instructed Mr. Biliotti to do all he can to afford his Excellency assistance or advice in an unofficial manner, should he apply for it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 7.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

Trebizond, December 20, 1884.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, on Sirri Pasha's departure, which took place a fortnight since, all the notabilities of the town accompanied him on board, and so many people turned out to witness his departure, that it almost amounted to a manifestation.

It was easy to detect in the inhabitants a dejected cast of countenance attributable not to the loss of the person of the Vali, but to apprehensions arising out of the fact that Lazes had had the uppermost on natives.

Since Sirri Pasha's departure, I have heard that his recall had been decided upon some time before, but that it was accelerated by the fact that, on the faith of Mazbatas from Ordoo, he reported, which, if true, is certainly an exaggeration, that the Lazes were almost in insurrection.

It is said that the refusal of the Minister of Justice to allow judicial officers to proceed to Ordoo was grounded on the principle that in outbreaks the presence of soldiers is required, and not that of public prosecutors.

Immediately after Sirri Pasha's departure, Tchoorooksooli Ali Pasha arrived here in high exultation.

Having called upon me, I take the liberty to report the gist of his long conversation with me.

He naturally spoke of the presumed persecution of the late Vali against his countrymen, and, in support of his assertion, mentioned cases wherein nefarious acts attributed to Lazes proved on inquiry to have been perpetrated by natives.

I gave him to understand that his countrymen, having been preceded here by a bad reputation, which, unluckily, was confirmed by depredations committed by several of them, ungrounded imputations were likely to occur, but that, so far as I knew, and according to his own statement, innocent Lazes had not been made to suffer for the misdeeds of other parties, while the imprisonment, even the slaying of such brigands as Yanik-Ahmed, Kotchogloo, and their bands (reference to my despatch of the 28th September, 1883), could not be called a persecution.

Ali Pasha's excuse was that the forementioned brigands did not belong to his clan, and that tranquillity prevailed at Ordoo since they ha l been killed. He admitted, however, that Kotchogloo's brothers, one of whom was at Fatza and another at Uniah, were still committing depredations, but that without the assistance of natives, who were in their bands, they could not subsist.

I pointed out to him in reply that no one had ever denied the existence of native miscreants, but that bands of brigands headed by Lazes were always likely to be considered as Laz bands; that it was immaterial for the populations whether the emigrants who robbed and killed them belonged to a clan or to another; and that it was for honest Lazes to put a stop to the misdeeds of the villains who disgraced the whole race.

Ali Pasha then said that the emigrants had requested the Sublime Porte to entrust them with the police of the districts in which they lived, and that, if their demand had been granted, no disorders would have taken place. He added that all was quiet at Ordoo, Fatza, and Uniah during the short time when his brother, Osman Pasha, acted as Kerserdar.

I replied that no permission was required from Constantinople for denouncing the reprehensible conduct of their dishonest countrymen, and for volunteering to assist the local authorities, who would have to judge of the opportuneness of availing themselves of their services for apprehending Laz brigands; and I concluded by saying that emigrants at large should be more anxious than any one else to avoid being unpopular in the districts in which they settled, and that it entirely depended on them to restore their damaged reputation.

Ali Pasha's presence at Ordoo is considered by all natives as a tacit encouragement to Lazes to have their own way, and, unluckily, all the incidents which have taken place since their settlement in this vilayet tend to strengthen this impression.

They state that Broussa was similarly situated so long as Dédé Pasha, another Laz Chief, was living among his countrymen in that vilayet, and that comparative tranquillity prevails there since he was appointed Mutessarif of Marash.

Under these circumstances, natives wonder why this precedent which has had satisfactory results is not resorted to in the case of Tchoorooksooli Ali Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 7.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

Trebizond, December 27, 1884.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch of the 11th instant, I have the honour to inform you that Aziz Pasha has taken possession of his post on Sunday last.

Having considered opportune not to conceal from him the contents of your forementioned despatch, he was most sensible to the good opinion you have of his character, and assured me that he would use his best endeavours in order to be always held in the same esteem by Her Majesty's Embassy.

He added that knowing that I am better acquainted than any one else here with the state of things in this vilayet, he hoped I would not refuse to communicate to him any information that would enable him to carry out his arduous duties.

The conversation having turned on Tchoorooksooli Ali Pasha, the Vali informed me that he already had occasion to tell him that he considered those trying to palliate the misdeeds of Lazes as their greatest enemies, for they had damaged the reputation of all the emigrants, amongst whom there certainly must be numerous honest men.

Ali Pasha does not appear to be in very high spirits since his interview with the Vali.

Ten of the Beys and of the Christian notabilities of Ordoo went to meet Aziz Pasha at Samsoon, and accompanied him here.

He told them that he would not accept general complaints against Ali Pasha or the Lazes; that the Courts of Justice were opened to those who had to lodge charges against them; and that as he intended to shortly proceed to Ordoo and judge by himself of the state of the country, he advised them to return there and to wait his arrival.

There is no doubt that Lazes will keep quiet for some time owing to the change of Vali, and also to the winter season.

Hadji Izzet Pasha, Aziz Pasha's father, was Vali at Trebizond some thirty-eight years back, and his good administration, to which natives say no other can be compared, is still so vivid in the recollection of the inhabitants of this town, that the appointment of the son has produced a most favourable impression.

Aziz Pasha is not himself unknown in this vilayet; some twelve years back he was Mutessarif at Samsoon, and the information received from that town is identical to that communicated to me by Her Majesty's Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 8.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received January* 31.)

(No. 40.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 23, 1885.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Mr. Vice-Consul Richards in a despatch, which has been transmitted to me by Mr. Plowden, dated the 9th ultimo, reports an encounter near Suleimanije between the Ottoman troops and the Kurdish tribe of the Shouan, in which the latter suffered a severe defeat, losing thirty men killed. The troops also succeeded in recovering a considerable amount of plunder from the Kurdish marauders. The Governor-General, who is now at Suleimanije, is reported to have the intention of building a large guard-house half-way between Kerkook and Suleimanije for the future protection of caravans. It is also said that his Excellency has discovered in the Kerkook district five petroleum springs, and what promises to be a productive coal-mine.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 9.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received February* 12.)

(No. 51.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 29, 1885.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, on the subject of the proposed new Erzeroum road.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 1.)

Sir, *Trebizond, January* 10, 1885.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that Aziz Pasha spoke to me of the existing Imperial Order for the immediate construction of a road by the Valley of Larkhana (Karakapan), of the incompleteness of the flying survey made on that line, and of his not feeling justified, under the circumstances, to undertake a work which might have for only result to entail upon the Government a much heavier expense than the estimated cost of 60,000 liras, without endowing the country with a convenient road.

His Excellency having added that he had called upon me to have my opinion on a subject in which he knew I took a deep interest, I communicated to him the Report inclosed in my despatch No. 42 of the 27th ultimo. But as soon as I had enumerated the advantages of the Surmenah line, without giving me time to proceed further, he repeated to me, almost word by word, the conclusions I had arrived at with regard to the importance of that road as connected with Armenia and the town of Trebizond.

He therefore intends to try by all means to obtain that the Larkhana line, as well as that of Surmenah, should be thoroughly surveyed, and that the construction of the new road should be undertaken on the line that offers superior advantages.

He does not conceal from himself the great difficulty to evade the execution of an Imperial Order, a difficulty increased by the fact that the Iradé was issued on the special recommendation of the Minister of Public Works; but Aziz Pasha considers the question at issue so important the he will use his best endeavours to attain this end, in which are deeply involved momentous British commercial interests.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 10.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 52.)
Constantinople, January 29, 1885.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, on the subject of Laz brigandage at Ordoo and Uniah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 10.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 2.)
Trebizond, January 14, 1885.

Sir,

NOTWITHSTANDING Tchoorooksooli Ali Pasha's assurances that perfect tranquillity prevailed at present at Ordoo, three Lazes, suspected of having plundered two months since the Armenian church in the village of Saïadja, having been captured, the stolen property was found in their possession.

The police likewise captured two other Lazes, who ten days ago robbed a Greek on the highway, and are in pursuit of a gang of Lazes, who a few months back plundered the Armenian church in the village of Tchamash.

Rumours reached us of a recent panic at Uniah, caused by a band of Lazes having attacked the town; other rumours represent the attacking party as natives disguised as Lazes.

Aziz Pasha having received no report on the subject, wired for information to the Mutessarif of Samsoon, on whom depends Uniah. He replied that there having only been an unsuccessful attempt to enter a house, he did not consider it worth while to trouble his Excellency for so insignificant a matter.

However, a Turkish Major, just arrived from Uniah, where he had proceeded from Fatza with a detachment of troops on the spreading of the report, states that a band of presumed Lazes, whose numbers are differently stated to be from five to eighteen men, after plundering a house, compelled its inmates to guide them to the house of a rich Armenian, and that the panic was caused by a general volley from the assailants in answer to a revolver-shot from the attacked party.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 11.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received February 12.)

E
(No. 54.)
Constantinople, February 3, 1885.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of despatches from Lieutenant-Colonel Everett, Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, in which he reports an attack upon two Kurdish villages by Nestorians.

I took an opportunity of calling the attention of Assim Pasha to the matter, and I recommended that the Imperial Government, while taking steps to maintain order, should act with moderation.

His Excellency stated that the Porte had already received the same information from its own authorities, and that the Imperial Government would use moderation in dealing with this affair; and that as everything is now quiet in the district of Gevver since the occurrence, the authorities of Erzeroum see no further occasion for the dispatch of troops, which they had at first contemplated, to the district in question.

I also took this opportunity of reminding Assim Pasha that all the advice of Her Majesty's Government as to the reforms in Armenia had been hitherto unheeded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 11.

Consul Everett to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 1.)
Erzeroum, January 12, 1885.

Sir,

I LEARNED on Friday last, the 9th instant, that very grave news had just been received from Hekkiari by telegraph. According to the account given me, the Nestorians either of Gevver or Goramar, a small district to the north of Amadieh, had attacked and burned to the ground two Kurdish villages, destroying the mosques, carrying off the cattle, and killing several of the inhabitants.

If the news be true, it is almost impossible to over-estimate its gravity, for without doubt very heavy reprisals will be made by the Moslems—reprisals which I fear the Government will not be able to prevent, and which may lead to serious consequences.

It is the first time that the Nestorians have ventured on so bold an act. Even under strong provocation, and there has been plenty at different times, they never appear, so far as I can learn, to have gone beyond complaints.

To take up arms even against one of the many powerful Kurdish tribes by which they are surrounded is for them an impossibility, and yet to-day we find them actually burning mosques—a deed which must of necessity bring down upon them the vengeance of every Moslem in the country.

It is therefore to be hoped that the intelligence is either false or greatly exaggerated.

In a letter which I received on the 10th instant from our Agent at Van, dated 4th January, there is no allusion made to the circumstance, so that if it occurred at all it must have happened very recently.

I may mention that the Government intended to send a battalion of infantry from Van into Hekkiari, but owing to the great quantity of snow (at least that is the reason given) they are not able to proceed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 11.

Consul Everett to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 2. Confidential.)
Erzeroum, January 13, 1885.

Sir,

IN my telegram of the 9th instant I mentioned that the information I had received with reference to the recent Nestorian outrage was communicated to me confidentially by Moussa Pasha. After relating to me the circumstance, Moussa, who appeared much agitated, gave it as his opinion that this action on the part of the Nestorians could be nothing but the work of Russia.

He based this belief on the fact that Major Kamsaragan, the late Russian Vice-Consul at Van, had on more than one occasion visited Marshimoum, the Nestorian Patriarch, and that Russian Staff officers had recently been in Hekkiari.

He then asked me whether I knew of this fact. I replied that I was perfectly aware of it, that in fact I had not long ago reported to you the presence of a Russian officer in Hekkiari, that an Englishman who had been recently travelling in that district had actually seen one with his own eyes, and that I could not understand why the officials either here or in Hekkiari continued to permit Russian officers to go about sketching both the country and the fortifications.

Understanding that I alluded to General Dennet's recent topographical work (see my despatch No. 31, Confidential, of the 2nd July), he said that he had written on four different occasions on this subject to the Porte, but that up to the present time he had not received any reply. After holding forth for some time on the aims of Russia, both as regards this country and India, and remarking that in his opinion the present time was exactly the opportunity she was seeking for, since England and France were occupied, and Turkey by herself was helpless, he said that he knew very well the Nestorians, and that nothing but a promise of assistance could possibly have induced them to act in so extraordinary a manner.

He then asked my advice as to what I thought ought to be done. I replied that of coure an impartial inquiry into the circumstances attending the outrage should be made, but that the most important step of all was to prevent reprisals, for, I said, if this should be the work of Russia, she could only find excuse for interference if a massacre of Christians were to follow this act. He then said that one battalion of troops was ordered immediately to Hekkiari for the purpose of keeping order, but that it might be very difficult at this time of year to move them, as they had neither warm clothing nor boots.

He finally promised to give me every information on the matter, and on Sunday last I learned from him that a telegram had been received from Van to the effect that it was impossible to march troops to Hekkiari at this moment. The reason assigned was the snow, but I expect the want of every necessary had more to do with it.

It is not possible for me to give an opinion on this subject at present. The story coming from Moslem sources is likely to be greatly exaggerated, but if it be true there can be no doubt that the Nestorians must have been pushed to it, and as Russian agents and officers have been unusually active in that district during the past year, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Russia may have something to do with it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.

Inclosure 3 in No. 11.

Consul Everett to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, January* 16, 1885.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 1 of the 12th instant, I have just received information that the aggressors were of the Nestorian Tyari tribe, and the two villages destroyed were Marnous and Katous, in the district of Gevver.

More than twenty of the inhabitants are reported to have been killed during the attack.

The Tyari tribe is the strongest among the Ashiret (tribal) Nestorians, and numbers 2,000 houses, or in round numbers about 16,000 souls.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT.

No. 12.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 56. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February* 4, 1885.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies of two despatches from Mr. Henderson, giving a further account of the deplorable state of affairs that at present exists at Aleppo.

In the second of these despatches Mr. Henderson reports the arrest and imprisonment by Djemil Pasha of a certain M. Dallal, one of the most respected and influential members of the Christian community at Aleppo. The charge upon which this gentleman has been arrested appears to be entirely without foundation, and is stated by Mr. Henderson to be simply a manœuvre on the part of the Vali to ingratiate himself with the Sultan.

In view of the circumstances of the case, and of the fact that it is reported that further arrests are to be made amongst the Christian population in connection with the plot alleged to have been set on foot by M. Dallal, I thought it my duty to bring the state of affairs at Aleppo to the notice of the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, and to request his Excellency to do all he could to obtain M. Dallal's release.

Assim Pasha stated to me in reply that he feared that as long as Djemil Pasha retained his post of Vali at Aleppo any action taken by the Sublime Porte in behalf of M. Dallal would be only likely to aggravate that gentleman's position; he promised, however, that he would bring the case to the notice of the Minister of the Interior, and consult his Highness as to the best means of obtaining M. Dallal's release.

With regard to the general state of affairs at Aleppo, Assim Pasha admitted that, though it was evident that the whole responsibility for the deplorable condition of the vilayet rested with Djemil Pasha, the Sublime Porte was not yet in a position to bring about his dismissal.

I beg to call your Lordship's attention to Mr. Henderson's remark in his despatch No. 61 as to the attitude of the French Consul. I had already pointed out this danger to Assim Pasha, as reported in my despatch No. 481 of the 19th December, and your Lordship was so good as to approve of my having done so in your despatch No. 10, Confidential, of the 9th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 12.

Consul Henderson to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 61.)
Sir, *Aleppo, December* 26, 1884.

WITH reference to previous correspondence on the state of affairs here, I have the honour to inform you that Shahim Pasha left here on Saturday for Constantinople with the avowed intention of throwing himself at the Sultan's feet to sue for justice for the outrageous manner in which he and his family have been treated by Djemil Pasha.

For twenty months the Vali has allowed no pay to be given to him, and he has been the victim of every sort of indignity, insult, and petty annoyance. At last his house was forced and his sword taken from him, notwithstanding peremptory orders from the Minister of War to the contrary, and his wife, after an illness of three days, died in convulsions. His family are now in want of the absolute necessities of life, and no one dare send them even a loaf of bread for fear of the Vali's vengeance.

When his Excellency left Aleppo soldiers and zaptiehs were sent all over the country to seize him at all hazards, but as he is well known for his bravery he reached Adana unmolested, where he was received by Abdin Pasha in his own house, and an armed escort of twenty-five men accompanied him from Adana on board the French steamer at Musgne with orders to repel any attempt of Djemil Pasha to arrest him.

Shahim Pasha is supported by influential persons at the Palace, and there is some hope that His Majesty may be persuaded that the state of siege which at present exists here cannot continue.

The feeling of indignation against the Governor-General, though suppressed by fear, is deep and bitter, and is so strong that, should he be dismissed, I believe his personal safety would be in danger, and that there would be difficulty in preventing a tumult, if not a serious disturbance.

My Russian colleague is on very bad terms with the Vali, and I believe by this mail invokes the aid of his Embassy to obtain his dismissal. In talking over the situation here with him a few days ago he remarked, "The longer this sort of thing continues the sooner it must all end, perhaps before Europe is ready for it." As regards my French colleague, if he has any influence at all, it is used to aggravate

matters, in the hope that foreign intervention will become necessary, and that his own Government will be called on to intervene.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 12.

Consul Henderson to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 1.) *Aleppo, January 7, 1885.*

Sir,

THE whole Christian population were thrown into a state of the greatest consternation last night by the arrest of M. Dallal, one of the most respectable and influential Christians of Aleppo. He was for some time Private Secretary to the ex-Grand Vizier Hairedeen Pasha, and afterwards Professor of Arabic in the University of Vienna. For the last year or two he has been resident with his family here.

Twenty soldiers surrounded his home and seized him and all his papers. On the papers being examined a few verses written twenty years ago, and two letters written to M. Dallal by Ali Suavi eight or ten years ago, were found. Djemil Pasha thereupon telegraphed to Constantinople that he had discovered a plot having for its object the revolt of the Christian population against the Sultan.

M. Dallal, who is a highly cultivated man, has meantime been imprisoned in the "cane" with the condemned criminals. Other arrests are, it is said, about to be made, and the Christian population is in a state of the greatest terror.

It is perfectly well known that M. Dallal is entirely innocent of any such charge as that trumped up against him, and that this is simply a manœuvre, but a most cruel one, on the part of the Vali to ingratiate himself with the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) P. HENDERSON.

No. 13.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 66.) *Constantinople, February 5, 1885.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 40 of the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Plowden, inclosing a copy of an interesting Report from the British Vice-Consul at Mosoul upon the affairs of that vilayet, and upon the efforts which are being made by the Vali to deal with the Hamawands and other turbulent Kurdish tribes.

I would venture to call your Lordship's attention to Mr. Plowden's remarks as to the imperfect means at the disposal of the Vali for keeping order in his vilayet, and as to the superficial character generally of the control exercised by the Turkish authorities over the Kurds who, unless some improvement is made in the Ottoman administration, would appear to be likely sooner or later to become again masters in their own country.

I would also beg to call your Lordship's attention to the account given by Mr. Richards of the quality of the petroleum which has been discovered in the district of Kerkook.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 13.

Consul-General Plowden to Mr. Wyndham.

Bagdad, January 14, 1885.

Sir,

IN continuation of this office despatch No. 810 | 93, dated the 30th December last, I have the honour to inclose copy of a further letter, No. 94, dated the 30th ultimo, from Mr. Vice-Consul Richards, giving an interesting account of the affairs of the Mosoul Vilayet, and of the success which has so far attended the Vali's efforts to deal with the Hamawands and other turbulent Kurdish tribes. Tahsin

Pasha seems to be a most praiseworthy Governor-General, and it is possible that if the means at his disposal were greater he might be able to effect some permanent good in the lawless province which he administers. But though the establishment of a continuous line of guard-houses is in the abstract an excellent measure, it will only be effective if the soldiers stationed in them and their officers are able and willing to do their duty. And it is not likely, I think, that great things will be done by men whose pay is habitually months in arrears, and whose clothes are in rags, or that they will fight with vigour against their own countrymen, for the local requirements are largely recruited from Kurds who are as courageous as they are, and who are better clad and better armed. The Vali's proceedings at the village of Shaklawa, which Mr. Richards has so graphically described, well illustrates the existing condition of things. Mahmoud Bey is only one of several petty Chiefs who, in a country which forms part of what is nominally a Turkish vilayet, exercises absolute power, and whose word is law to all the inhabitants, Moslem and Christian alike, within the circle of his influence. To his astonishment, we are somewhat naively informed, the Vali discovered that this Chief owed a large sum to the Turkish Government for arrears of revenue, as if the officials at Mosoul must not have been well aware of this circumstance for years past. About three years ago I marched through the country referred to in Mr. Richards' despatch, between Sulimanieh and Khoi Sandjak, and was impressed with the entire absence of any real control of the Ottoman officials over the district in question. At Khoi Sandjak I found a Turk from Constantinople established as Kaïmakam, who was wholly in the hands of the local Kurdish Notables, and I shall be surprised if the simple expedient of appointing a petty Mudir at Shaklawa has any result in reducing Mahmoud Bey to effectual obedience. Slowly and surely, as it seems to me, the Kurds are reasserting themselves, and they will, in the course of a few years, unless some new life is in the meantime infused into the Ottoman administration, or unless some other Power steps in, become again master of their own country.

(Signed) T. C. PLOWDEN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 13.

Vice-Consul Richards to Consul-General Plowden.

(No. 94.) *Mosoul, December 30, 1884.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that his Excellency the Governor-General returned to Mosoul on the 28th instant, having been absent three months on the annual tour of inspection. His Excellency informs me that the Hamawands are now thoroughly subdued, and he hopes that henceforth there will be no more trouble in that quarter, he having taken precautionary measures, such as the establishment of a continuous line of guard-houses along the Turco-Persian frontier and on the main caravan routes leading to Bagdad, to prevent a recurrence to marauding forays on the part of the wild Kurdish semi-nomadic tribes frequenting those districts. The Djaff difficulty, too, he has reason to believe, will shortly be arranged.

During his journey towards Mosoul, his Excellency had occasion to pass through a village called Shaklawa, situated in the sub-district known as the Khoi Sandjak, a wild, mountainous, and in parts almost inaccessible region lying to the east of Mosoul. Here he found a state of things in existence such as he had hitherto, and not without reason, supposed was no longer possible, even in the wildest outlying districts of Kurdistan. This village of Shaklawa is the head-quarters of a Kurdish Chief named Mahmoud Bey, who exercises an absolute and despotic sway over a tract of country containing thirty-five villages, and with a circumference of 60 miles. Neither he nor his forefathers have ever recognized the Turkish Government, except to the extent of occasionally sending a few hundred piastres to the Kaïmakam of Khoi Sandjak in payment of the "salijan" tax, while his word is law for every man, woman, and child living in his territory. Christians and Moslems alike recognize the "Mir," as they term him, as the absolute and undisputed arbiter of their lives, property, and destinies generally, whom with fear and trembling they consult on every subject, even of the most personal and private nature, and without whose sanction they never venture on a single action. He disposes of a force of several hundreds of men armed with Martini-Henry rifles, and never leaves the village without a personal escort of 100 to 150 men.

The Governor-General acted at once with a courageous promptitude and decision which deserve the highest encomiums. Although having only an immediate following

of some sixty soldiers, who might have at any moment, at a nod from their Chief the Mir, been massacred by the lawless Kurds, considerably their superiors in point of number, and their equals in arms and general equipment, he, without any hesitation, and as soon as he thoroughly understood the state of affairs, summoned the Mir to his presence, and informed him, to his infinite astonishment, that his "reign" ceased from that day.

He then appointed a Mudir, whom he had previously summoned from Khoi Sandjak, and announced to the assembled inhabitants of Shaklawa that thenceforth they were free from the yoke of the grinding tyranny to which they had been subjected, and would be called upon to recognize no authority but that of the Mudir whom he presented to them. On a further inquiry his Excellency discovered that a sum of at least 100,000 piastres was owing to the Government as arrears of taxes, which sum it appears that the Mir had collected, but failed to forward to the constituted authorities at Khoi Sandjak.

This amount was promptly exacted from the Mir, who was then gravely reprimanded by the Governor-General, and informed in the most explicit terms that if he gave any further cause for complaint his property would be confiscated to the State, and he himself sent into exile. These threats had the desired effect of reducing the Mir to the most abject submission, and he sued for pardon with tears in his eyes. His Excellency left the village shortly afterwards, followed by the joyful acclamations and prayers of the inhabitants, whom he had previously exhorted to maintain their independence, assuring them of his aid and protection.

The prompt, fearless, and energetic conduct of the Governor-General on this occasion is worthy of all praise, and all the more so that he has succeeded in effecting what Namyk, Midhat, and Taka-ud-deen Pashas, all three of whom visited this village in turn, successively failed to do, viz., reduce this turbulent Kurdish Chief to subjection. He, too, would have had to cope with a far more formidable opponent had the Mir been aware of his (the Governor-General's) approach, which, fortunately, he was not until too late to make the necessary hostile preparations.

I may add, with reference to my despatch No. 89 of the 9th December, that I am informed by M. Abdulla Cacheco, one of the Assistant Engineers of this province, that he has inspected the coal-mine at Selahiyyi (Kufri), and is of opinion that it will prove, when properly worked, very productive. Of the petroleum, too, he speaks in very high terms, in which opinion he is supported by the Central Governor (Mutessarif), who assures me that the process of purification now being actively carried on by means of machines brought from Bagdad will shortly reach a degree of perfection which will render the oil no mean rival of that imported from America. In appearance it is exactly similar, its chief defect being its smokiness when lighted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. S. RICHARDS.

No. 14.

Earl Granville to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 74.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 21, 1885.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 54 of the 3rd instant, as well as the copies of the despatches from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum in which he reports an attack upon two Kurdish villages by Nestorians.

I approve the advice which you gave to Assim Pasha on this subject, as recorded in your despatch, as well as your having reminded his Excellency that all the advice given by Her Majesty's Government with regard to reforms in Armenia has been hitherto unheeded by the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 15.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 113.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 2, 1885.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond on the

state of affairs at Orloo, Fatza, and Uniah. I have furnished the Porte with a Memorandum calling attention to the desire of the Vali, Aziz Pasha, to reform the police force, and to discard the Laz element from it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 15.

Consul Billiotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 6.) *Trebizond, January* 31, 1885.
Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 4 of the 17th instant, I have the honour to report that Aziz Pasha returned two days since from his trip in the districts inhabited by Lazes.

The information which I have been able to gather from my conversation with his Excellency, and from other sources, is that the condition of those districts is even far worse than it was represented by Sirri Pasha to the Porte.

The Vali seems to have taken into consideration the general state of things without entering into details with regard to the conduct of Tchourouksooli Ali Pasha, who appears to have come to terms with the Beys of Ordoo.

About twenty Laz brigands were apprehended by order of Aziz Pasha during his short stay in that district.

He found things in a much worse condition at Fatza and Uniah. The incursion of Lazes in the latter town reported in my forementioned despatch was true, and not limited to one, but amounted to five or six.

The Bimbashi of Gendarmerie at Samsoon, a certain Suleiman Aga, being himself a Laz, seems to have allowed the worse characters amongst his countrymen, in fact notorious brigands, to enter the police force at Fatza and Uniah, both towns depending on the Djanik Mutessarifflik.

The Laz highway brigands being naturally in league with their confederates enrolled in the public force, the condition of the unfortunate natives, who could not even complain, can be easily imagined.

It would appear that while the latter were thus entirely left at the mercy of their aggressors, Suleiman Aga had given to understand to the Mutessarif at Samsoon, as well as to the Kaïmakam at Uniah, that the incursions of which the inhabitants were the victims were got up by them in order to damage the reputation of Lazes.

Aziz Pasha at once suspended from his functions the Kaïmakam of Uniah, and temporarily appointed a certain Hosroff Boy, a worthy Bimbashi of Gendarmerie, to act as Governor. This officer, who is a Circassian, is the same who, under Sirri Pasha, destroyed Yanik Ahmed and Kotchogloo's bands, and who for his trouble was threatened for a time to be removed from the districts from which he had, at the risk of his life, extirpated Laz brigandage. (Reference to my No. 69 of the 22nd December, 1883.)

Upwards of a year back Sirri Pasha, suspecting Suleiman Aga to side with his unruly countrymen, intended to have him removed from Samsoon, but he was informed by the Porte that the Mutessarif of Djanik considered him to be the only officer of gendarmerie in his district in whom reliance could be placed.

I understand that this Suleiman Aga is also protected by Hassan Fehmi Pasha, who has used his best endeavours to have him appointed Colonel ("Alai Beyi") in the Vilayet of Trebizond.

Acting Governor Hosroff Boy intended to immediately call a few of his countrymen, for the double purpose of personal security and of protection to the native populations.

But the latter object cannot be fully attained before the present police force at Fatza and Uniah is entirely reformed.

So far as I have been able to understand, Aziz Pasha considers the immediate disarming and apprehension of the Laz brigands who have entered that corps as an indispensable necessity, but that he will not venture to undertake the execution of this measure without special authority, for which he has applied to the Porte.

I have heard from a good source that the immigrants openly aspire to the erection of the three districts of Ordoo, Fatza, and Uniah into a Laz province, to be called Gurgistan. The name by which they call themselves is "Gurgis."

Commercial, administrative, and military considerations have induced Aziz Pasha

to propose Vona, of the future importance of which I have myself spoken in more than one Report, as the seat of the intended Mutessariflik in the Cazas of Ordoo, Fatza, and Uniah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 16.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 133.) *Constantinople, March 7, 1885.*
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Mr. Biliotti, inclosing a copy of a letter addressed by the Vali of Trebizond to the Minister of the Interior with regard to the proposed Mutessariflik in the districts inhabited by Lazes in that vilayet.

From this letter it appears that the port of Vona is considered by his Excellency to offer the most advantages as the seat of the Mutessariflik in question, both from a commercial and a military point of view.

I also inclose, for your Lordship's information, a copy of Mr. Biliotti's despatch No. 3 of the 14th January last, in which he sets forth the opportuneness of merging the three Cazas of Ordoo, Fatza, and Uniah into one Mutessariflik.

I have also the honour to inclose a copy of a *pro-memoriâ* respecting this question which I have placed in the hands of the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 16.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 3.) *Trebizond, January 14, 1885.*
Sir,

IN a recent interview Aziz Pasha entertained me of the opportuneness of erecting into a Mutessariflik the three Cazas of Ordoo, Fatza, and Uniah, in which are settled 40,000 Lazes, and begged me, should I concur with his opinion, to submit his scheme to your consideration, in order to enlist in its favour the influence of Her Majesty's Embassy.

I replied that I believed no measure was better calculated to re-establish order in that unruly part of the vilayet; that the measure had already been recommended by his predecessor, but that the consequent additional expenditure appeared to be an insuperable difficulty; and that, should it be removed, the next important question would be to find a fit Mutessarif.

His Excellency informed me that the only way to overcome the financial obstacle, which he considered to be the real objection of the Porte, was to transfer to Ordoo the Mutessariflik now at Gumushané, where its maintenance was not so urgent as in the districts inhabited by Lazes; and that he had in view for the post a person on whom he could not only place all reliance, but who was so situated that his appointment might have the most beneficial results on another most essential point.

I should here explain that, in a previous conversation with his Excellency, I had acquainted him with the efficient protection that Lazes find at Constantinople in Hassan Fehmi Pasha, their countryman, in consequence of which Aziz Pasha conceived the idea of opposing influence to influence in high quarters.

The person he proposes as Mutessarif at Ordoo is the present Ashar Memouri (tithe collector) at Angora, an Albanian, who, besides appearing to possess all required qualifications for the post, offers the advantage of being a perfect stranger to natives as well as to Lazes, and a near relation to the President of the Council of State.

It would have been difficult to make a better choice.

In my humble opinion the more extended powers of a Mutessarif, the consequent increase of the police force, and the presence of regular Courts of Justice attended by a sub-titute Public Prosecutor, are so essential requisites for improving the administration, that the consequent additional expenditure should not for a moment stand as an obstacle.

As I reported in my despatches Nos. 41 and 47 of 1883, there is a general wish in the populations that Mutessarifs should be appointed in the room of Kaimakams, and Kaimakams in that of Mudirs, as a means to obtain the security consequent on an increased police force and on Courts of Justice with more extended jurisdiction.

Therefore these important advantages, instead of being abolished where they already exist, should, on the contrary, be extended as much as possible to other localities.

However, should the appointment of an additional Mutessarif in this vilayet be an insuperable obstacle, there can be no doubt that the presence of an officer of that rank can be less dispensed with in the districts inhabited by Lazes than at Gumushané.

Under these circumstances Aziz Pasha's proposal, which he has already submitted to the Porte, is the only measure offering a chance to restore tranquillity in that part of the vilayet, and should be adopted with as little delay as possible.

I may state that the population of the district of Gumushané amounts to about 60,000 souls, and that of Ordoo, Fatza, and Uniah, including Lazes, to no less than nearly 190,000.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 16.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 1. Secret.) *Trebizond, February 2, 1885.*
Sir,

AZIZ PASHA confidentially communicated to me, for your information, a despatch, herewith inclosed, in translation, which he addressed to the Minister of the Interior with regard to the seat of the proposed Mutessariflik in the districts inhabited by Lazes.

According to information which he received from the Porte since his return here, it would appear that his previous proposal (reference to my No. 3 of 1885) for the transfer of the Mutessariflik of Gumushané to Ordoo, &c., was under the consideration of the Council of State, and most likely to be adopted.

His Excellency's observations with regard to the future commercial importance of Vona appear to me the more true that I made identical statements in more than one Report, and lately again at the end of my Report, dated October last, on the Ordoo-Sivas Road.

Aziz Pasha has further taken into consideration the military advantages of that station, which are undeniable, and these, coupled with commercial prospects and administrative convenience, can leave no doubt as to Vona being the most adapted spot for the seat of the intended Mutessariflik. This selection will be the means to accelerate the development of trade, which, by the force of circumstances, is certain to take place in that quarter in a more or less remote period.

His Excellency desired me to call your special attention to the strategical importance of Vona, and added that he was certain Her Majesty's Government would take any question of territorial defence in Turkey more at heart than would do the governing class at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 3 in No. 16.

Aziz Pasha to the Minister of the Interior.

(No. 14.)
(Translation.) *Uniah, 7 Rebiul Evel, 1302 (January 23, 1885).*

I HAVE had the honour to submit to your Excellency, in my despatch No. 102 of the 29th ultimo, that with the expenditure incurred for the unimportant Mutessariflik of Gumushkhané, the united Cazas of Ordoo, Fatza, and Uniah, where the Administration is most defectuous, should be erected into a sandjak, the seat of which should be fixed after a visit to the locality.

At first glimpse, Fatza, being the most central point, appears to be called to be the seat of the projected Mutessariflik, but the port of Vona, which is not far from the

centre, offers so far superior commercial, military, and administrative advantages that it should have the preference.

It is no secret to your Excellency that the port of Vona is at a distance by sea of 12 miles from the town of Ordoo, of 20 from that of Fatza, and of 26 from that of Uniah; that it is a natural harbour; that between the Bosphorus and Batoum there is no other port offering like it a safe refuge to vessels; and that, in several respects, it is even preferable to that of Synope.

Under these circumstances, small and large steamers and sailing craft, taken by storm in the winter season, run to the port of Vona, and when in it no longer run sea risks.

This port, which is a gift of the Almighty, though entirely open in the direction of the east and north-east, is secure against these two winds, in consequence of the high range of mountains which rise behind it, being covered with snow in the autumn, winter, and spring. Easterly and north-easterly winds only prevail after the melting of the snow on the forementioned range of mountains, and, if they happen to blow before, they are so light that some merchantmen take their winter quarters in that port, where, in the recollection of living men, no vessel was ever wrecked.

As the road from the town of Ordoo to Sivas runs on the range of hills behind Vona, and as the road which is to be constructed from the town of Ordoo to Vona will shorten the distance by five hours, it is most probable that the small village of Koz-Afghzi, situated in the vicinity of that port, will become the greatest centre of commercial transactions on this sea-shore.

In consequence of the opening of the Ordoo road, and of the construction of that of Uniah, at a distance of 12 and 26 miles on the right and left of Vona, both leading to Sivas, which is the centre of Anatolia, the port of Vona, under an administrative and military point of view, is to be considered as the key of Anatolia.

I trust that your Excellency, being convinced of the truth of my statements, will order, with as little delay as possible, that the important Mutessariflik of Vona should be established, and as the topographical situation of that locality is convenient for defence, also that, after the construction of a konak and other administrative buildings, fit barracks and fortifications should be erected on certain important and strong points, to stand in the eyes of the world as an example of the great progress for considerate territorial defence accomplished under the auspices of our august Sovereign.

(Signed) AZIZ.

Inclosure 4 in No. 16.

Pro-memorid.

L'AMBASSADE de Sa Majesté Britannique avait dernièrement pris la liberté d'exposer, à titre officieux, à la Sublime Porte, les avantages considérables qui auraient résulté, tant pour le pays que pour le Gouvernement Impérial lui-même, par la suppression du Sandjak de Gumush-kané, et par la création d'un nouveau sandjak, composé des cazas importants d'Ordou, de Fatza, et de Ounieh.

L'Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique se permet aujourd'hui de soumettre à la Sublime Porte, à titre officieux, que dans le cas où le Gouvernement Impérial constituerait le port de Vona comme siège de l'Administration de ce nouveau sandjak, on en retirerait de grands avantages, attendu que ce port a non seulement une importance commerciale, mais c'est surtout un point stratégique très important.

Ambassade d'Angleterre,
Le 23 Février, 1885.

No. 17.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received March* 25.)

(No. 138.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 16, 1885.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 122 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond reporting on the state of that vilayet, and on the steps taken by Aziz Pasha to re-establish tranquillity there.

Mr. Biliotti points out the danger of the proposal which has been made of the erection of Samsoon into an independent Mutessariflik, and the effect it would be likely to have on Aziz Pasha's prestige.

In a further despatch on this subject, of which I have also the honour of inclosing copy, Mr. Biliotti mentions the appointment of Hadji Hassan Bey as Mutessarif of Samsoon, and alludes to the authority given to Aziz Pasha to disarm the Lazes and to appoint circuit Judges. With regard to the latter point, I have brought to the knowledge of the Porte Mr. Biliotti's suggestion, that it would be advisable that properly qualified Judges should be sent from Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 17.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 10.) *Trebizond, February* 27, 1885.
Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 4, Secret, of the 18th instant, I have the honour to inform you that instead of the important instructions expected from the Porte with regard to the districts inhabited by Lazes, Aziz Pasha received a few days ago a telegram from the Minister of the Interior, inclosing a copy of one addressed to him by the Mutessarif of Samsoon.

Khossroff Bey, who most praiseworthily carries out the difficult duty confided to him to repress brigandage in those districts, is represented in the communication made by the Vali's subordinate as oppressing and torturing the population.

However, there is nothing in Hosroff Bey's precedents to induce me to believe in the accusation brought against him, though it is the repetition of what took place under Sivri Pasha in identical circumstances. Besides, far from hearing any complaints, the news received from those districts is that the populations are greatly relieved from their sufferings by Hosroff Bey's energetic conduct, and that tranquillity prevails in that quarter. I may add, that the abuse of power spoken of is hardly admissible with the presence of the Kaimakam of Tireboli, who, about a fortnight ago, was dispatched by Aziz Pasha to act at Uniah pending the nomination of a permanent Governor by the Porte.

The Vali having already reported that Reshid Pasha, the Mutessarif of Samsoon, was under the influence of Taboor Aghassi, Suleiman Bey, a Laz, the authorities at Constantinople were in a position to judge of the value of the statement of that Governor.

But not only does the Minister of the Interior invite Aziz Pasha to explain the discrepancy between his Reports and those of his subordinate, but he also asks his opinion as to the advisability of erecting Samsoon into an independent Mutessariflik.

In the actual state of things, this communication can only be taken as a disapproval of Aziz Pasha's administration, which, though inaugurated shortly ago, has already produced beneficial results.

In consequence of the forementioned communication, the Vali cannot think of putting into execution his scheme with regard to the Mutessarif of Samsoon, to Suleiman Aga, and to the notorious brigands enrolled in the Gendarmerie.

As even secret communications ooze out in some way or other, the check received by Aziz Pasha, besides encouraging Lazes, places him in an unpleasant dilemma.

In fact, should he continue to leave Hosroff Bey at Uniah, not only will his life be in greater danger than ever from foul play, but, with the turn that take things, he even might be tried and condemned for murdering innocent Muhadjirs.

The Laz brigand killed in the first encounter, and another of Kodjoglou's band, Ismailoglou Ahmed, who quite lately was shot dead, could furnish plausible pretexts.

On the other hand, should Hosroff Bey be recalled, Aziz Pasha's authority would be irretrievably damaged, and all natives left at the mercy of brigands.

I have endeavoured to find an explanation to the unaccountable leniency of the Porte towards Lazes in general, and the only conclusion I can arrive at is that the Government, relying on them for defending the country against Russia, are inclined to allow them to have their own way.

If this be the case, the fact is lost sight of that, in order to secure the sympathy

of Lazes, the Porte estranges that of natives, and that the latter, who can furnish as good soldiers, number nearly 100,000 against hardly 40,000 immigrants.

The hatred which is sure to result from Lazes being given a free field would induce natives, in the event of an invasion, to side with Russia, and their co-operation with the enemy would more than neutralize the equivocal contingent on which the Government may place reliance. However, a nearer at hand complication may take place.

I have observed during my last trip at Ordoo that, since the settlement of Lazes in that and neighbouring districts, peasants and Beys have drawn nearer. The presence of a common foe has caused the two hitherto inimical native classes to rely on each other for protection. The Beys no longer are so despotic and oppressive as they used to be, but their influence on their tenants, which already was great, is now without bounds.

I saw 3,000 labourers, who had just reached their distant homes after finishing their toilsome task on the road, returning within three days to the last man at the call of their Bey to relay the macadam which was considered defective; and I have heard that identical Bey, as well as others, say that if the Porte did not adopt more efficient measures to put for ever a stop to the depredations of Lazes they would be compelled to take the law into their own hands, and that they could more than do for the emigrants settled in their districts.

This having been stated at a time when Sirri Pasha was doing his best to repress brigandage, and was successful to the extent allowed to him, the feelings of the Beys may be imagined if, after recalling that Governor-General, the Porte should again disapprove the conduct of the newly-appointed Vali, on whom they placed all reliance for re-establishing tranquillity.

As some of these Beys are resolute men, and as their tenants will blindly obey them, a conflict between natives and Lazes is not beyond the bounds of possibility, and such a conflict would naturally furnish Russia with a most plausible pretext to step into this vilayet for the purpose of restoring order. Be this as it may, the counter-action of the Mutessarif of Samsoon has complicated the question.

I must say that the reports I receive from that town represent Reshad Pasha as a very able official. However, appearances confirm the supposition that he submits to Suleiman Aga's influence, or more likely to that of exalted functionaries.

The presence of Laz brigands at Fatza and Uniah is admitted by Tehuruksooli Ali Pasha himself (reference to my No. 40 of the 20th December last). When Aziz Pasha proceeded to those districts he called the Mutessarif of Samsoon, under whose immediate jurisdiction they are placed, in order to assist him in the repression of brigandage.

While the town of Uniah had more than once been attacked by Lazes, the Mutessarif endeavoured to induce his superior to share his own conviction, that the attacks were got up by natives to damage Lazes.

He, consequently, was invited by the Vali to return to his post, and he must have so done with a bitter feeling, which can only have grown in intensity with Hosroff Bey's success.

Under these circumstances, it is not astonishing that Reshad Pasha should see in an unfavourable light the proceedings of that officer, which, besides, must be represented to him by Suleiman Aga under dark colours.

It is to be expected that Hosroff Bey is occasionally compelled to treat with due severity those of the emigrants who may be suspected to lend a hand to the concealment or escape of brigands, or who are otherwise connected with them. But the difference is great between a necessity of this kind, always coupled with the repression of brigandage, and the oppression and torture of the population.

In censuring the conduct of Hosroff Bey, the Mutessarif of Samsoon is exactly doing what, upwards of a year since, was done by an eminent functionary, whose sympathy for Lazes cannot be doubted. (Reference to my despatch of the 22nd December, 1883.)

Aziz Pasha had never been in contact with Lazes before his arrival here. He was sent to ascertain the truth of Sirri Pasha's statements, which were considered to be grossly exaggerated.

Knowing where the wind blows from, it was in the personal interest of the new Vali to palliate Laz misdoings, but he is too conscientious to do so.

It was to be presumed that the known ability, energy, and honesty of Aziz Pasha had induced the Porte to confide to him the administration of this province, which was considered to be in an unsettled condition.

However, when he submits the real state of things, as well as the remedies to be applied, instead of getting an answer, he is consulted as to the advisability of severing from his jurisdiction two of the three districts in which he was supposed to have the special trust to restore order.

The erection of Samsoon into an independent Mutessariflik at this stage and in the actual mood of the authorities in that town would increase brigandage and the sufferings of the populations, and might lead to an outbreak between the two races.

As it would at the same time completely break Aziz Pasha's prestige for the good administration of the other cazas remaining under his jurisdiction, it is to be hoped that the projected scheme will be abandoned.

If that be the case, it would be out of the question that both Aziz Pasha and Reshad Pasha should be maintained in the respective posts which they occupy at present.

Their antagonism would be as detrimental to the public.

It is for the Porte to make a choice between these two functionaries for further service in this vilayet, but if the Lazes are not to be allowed to have their own way no hesitation is possible as to the choice.

I just hear that another Laz brigand, named Tambolan, was shot dead by the Gendarmerie in the district of Uniah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure 2 in No. 17.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 12.) *Trebizond, March 3, 1885.*

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 10 of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to inform you that two days since Aziz Pasha received a telegram from the Minister of the Interior acquainting him that Hadji Hassan Bey, the Mutessarif of Yozgat, now at Constantinople, was ordered to exchange posts with Reshad Pasha of Samsoon.

The Vali immediately wired the news to Hosroff Bey, who, on hearing of the accusations against him, had expressed his intention to resign.

Aziz Pasha received at about the same time a despatch from the Porte, by which it appears that the latter is at last convinced of the truth with regard to Lazes.

His Excellency is told that the question of the erection of a Mutessariflik in the districts inhabited by them is not yet decided; that the Minister of War has again been applied to with regard to the disreputable existing Gendarmerie; that he is authorized to disarm Lazes and to appoint circuit Judges.

The tardy decision taken is a great boon for the populations, an immense advantage for the Government themselves, and no small a satisfaction for Aziz Pasha, whose suggestions are approved and acted upon by the Porte.

There is now a hope that his Excellency will succeed in eradicating for ever Laz disorders from this vilayet.

I beg leave to point out that qualified Judges should have been sent from Constantinople, together with a Public Prosecutor. The former are not to be found here, and there is no spare substitute Prosecutor.

By a singular coincidence, both Sirri and Reshad Pashas were removed from this vilayet to that of Angora on account of Lazes, but for opposite motives: the former for not being, the second for being, friendly to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 18.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received March 25.)

(No. 145.) *Constantinople, March 20, 1885.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 54 of the 3rd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's

Consul at Erzeroum, containing further particulars respecting the recent attack by Nestorians on Kurdish villages in the Hakkiari district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 18.

Consul Everett to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 13.)

Erzeroum, March 2, 1885.

Sir,

IN continuation of my despatches Nos. 1 and 4 of the 12th and 16th January respectively, I have the honour to forward further particulars respecting the Nestorian outrage in Hakkiari.

Two years ago a Kurdish tribe, known as the Maranos, and inhabiting the tract of country situated between Gevver and the district occupied by the Tyari and Tkhouba Nestorians, made a raid on the flocks of these latter, killed the shepherds, and carried off about 3,000 sheep.

Last year Edhem Pasha, the Governor-General, visited their district, and was waited on by a deputation from these two Nestorian tribes to request his intervention.

The Governor-General promised his assistance, and sending for the Chiefs of the Maranos Kurds induced them to restore the whole of the sheep. Instead, however, of returning them to their owners, he caused them to be sent to Bashkalch, the seat of Government.

Shortly afterwards Marshimoum, the Nestorian Patriarch, received a letter from Edhem Pasha, wherein he was informed that the sheep had been sold, at his orders, for a medjidie a-piece in the market, and that the money derived from the sale would be retained by the Government in lieu of arrears of taxes.

The Patriarch replied to the effect that the Tyari and Tkhouba felt much aggrieved at this breach of faith, but the Vali paid no attention to his remonstrance. The two Nestorian tribes then made the attack on the Maranos that I have mentioned in my previous despatches.

The Vali becoming alarmed immediately telegraphed to the Porte that an insurrection had broken out among the Nestorians, whereupon orders were received by the military authorities to dispatch troops immediately to Djulamerik and Gevver. Two battalions of infantry left Van for the troubled district, and it is believed that four battalions were sent up from the Mosul Vilayet. The troops do not appear to have been able to effect anything, but their inaction may be fully accounted for by the impassable state of the country during the winter. In the meantime it is reported that great excitement reigns in Hakkiari, and that the tribes of Tyari and Tkhouba on the one side and the Maranos Kurds on the other are preparing to fight it out in the spring.

It is also said that, in consequence of representations made by Marshimoum to the Porte, Edhem Pasha is to be dismissed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT,
Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan.

No. 19.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(Received March 25.)

(No. 151.)

Constantinople, March 21, 1885.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, forwarding two interesting Reports on the state of the Vilayets of Bitlis and Dersim.

I have thought it advisable to communicate to the Sublime Porte a *pro-memoria* containing the principal facts reported by Colonel Everett with regard to the above districts of Asia Minor.

Judging by these Reports the general state of security appears to be improving, and Major Trotter, Military Attaché to Her Majesty's Embassy, who was Consul for

Kurdistan for three years after the late war between Russia and Turkey, informs me that it was then considered impracticable to travel across the Dersim district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 19.

Consul Everett to Mr. Wyndham.

Erzeroum, January 30, 1885.

Sir,

IN connection with the journey I made last autumn through some of the vilayets composing this Consular jurisdiction, I have the honour to inclose herewith two short Reports on the new Vilayets of Bitlis and the Dersim, which I trust may not prove uninteresting.

These notices being strictly of a political character, everything foreign to the subject, such as the nature and products of the country, mineral wealth, commerce, and other matters which naturally come under the observation of a traveller, have been carefully excluded from them, and will be treated of hereafter, partly in my Commercial Report, and partly in another which I hope to be able to prepare for insertion in the new series of Blue Books set apart for subjects of commercial and general interest.

I have also endeavoured in these Reports, as far as possible, to generalize the subject. It appeared to me that the details of particular complaints, or of petty raids and robberies which from time immemorial have been made in the country, or of feuds between this and that tribe of Kurds, &c., were not only useless, but out of date, and that a broad statement of the general condition of the districts, more especially as compared with former times, would be far more acceptable to Her Majesty's Government, and altogether more profitable reading.

In order to make this comparison I studied closely some of the older Reports, and I have been compelled to conclude that although these particular provinces are still far removed from that condition of things which forms the basis of prosperity, yet a decided progress has been made, which is not on the whole discreditable to the Porte, considering the very short time that has elapsed since these districts were barbarous feudal States, engaged with each other and with the Government in disastrous wars.

As an Appendix to the Report on Bitlis, I have attached some information about the Kurds of Modkan (a district that has never yet been visited by an European), from notes collected by Yusuf Effendi, the Dragoman to the Consulate, who visited it in 1880.

Here then it only remains for me to say a few words on the other two vilayets through which I passed, viz., Diarbekir and Kharput.

In Diarbekir the proper management of the nomad Kurds is the great problem that has to be solved, and it seems to me that the solution is as far off as ever. It is quite evident that so long as a vast array of Kurdish tribes continue to make biennial peregrinations, and to graze their flocks in winter on land that would otherwise be cultivated, so long the revenues and inhabitants of the province must continue to suffer. No less than fifteen tribes descend from the Taurus every autumn to winter in the plains around Diarbekir, with ruinous consequences to the country. Even as early as 1835 Mr. Brant pointed this out in a Memorandum regarding the Kurds, in which he speaks of the desolation caused by their presence, and tells us how the plain of Diarbekir, "once swarming with villages," has become a desert. It may fairly be presumed that the number of agriculturists has ever since that time been gradually decreasing.

Certainly a sadder spectacle could hardly be witnessed than that which meets the eye of the traveller between Sert and Diarbekir, where ruined villages and deserted lands testify more surely than the language of the most accurate informant to a decay which seems threatening to depopulate the country. At the time of my journey the province was quiet enough. The Kurds had not yet come down from the northern mountains, and the villagers were enjoying the last days of their annual season of repose.

From all accounts, the inhabitants of the Sandjak of Mardin suffer more than those of Diarbekir. The whole of that neighbourhood is a vast winter camping-ground for nomads. From the north-east come the tribes who summer in the Bohtan. To the south are Arabs who occasionally, and far more frequently than heretofore, raid up

north for purposes of plunder. To the immediate north in the Caza of Midiat are the turbulent tribes of the Heverki, Halil Begia, Aïsa Begia, and Dashurki, whose normal state is perpetual warfare; while sedentary tribes of the Kiki (900 tents), the Sowr (450 houses), the Mushkili (250 houses), and others represent the owners or tenants of the soil. That tranquillity should be found to exist in a community so unsympathetic and lawless is, in the absence of administration, an impossibility. Blood feuds and questions arising out of rights of pasturage produce frequent tumults which the authorities in their weakness are powerless to quell. No year passes without the committal of grave outrages; indeed it is but a week ago that I received information from our Agent of the sacking of three Christian villages in the Caza of Djezirah by the Tayan Nomad Kurds, and of such suffering on the part of the Christians in Midiat as to compel the Syrian Patriarch of Mardin to address a telegram on the subject directly to the Porte. It is reported that in this one sandjak alone no less than 300 murders have been committed during the past twelve months without any steps being taken to bring the criminals to justice. It is possible, says our Agent, that this number is exaggerated, but it is certain that the condition of things is in the highest degree unsatisfactory.

The third Sandjak of Diarbekir, Maïden, is quieter, but there appears to be always trouble in the two Cazas of Tchermuk and Severek, especially in the latter, owing to the close proximity of the Milli Kurds.

Various remedies have been from time to time suggested for rendering the nomads more amenable to discipline. I observe that Mr. Brant proposed the drastic measure of depriving them of arms and tents, and thus forcing them to become agriculturists. Again, in the Wilson-Trotter scheme of reform, an agent is suggested whose duty would be to supervise the annual movements, and act as an intermediary with the Government in all questions concerning them. Under him were to be sub-agents, who would personally superintend the migrations of the tribes. The first proposal is too radical. There would be no objection to depriving the Kurds of their arms if the measure were general throughout the country, but very great difficulty would be encountered in carrying out even this portion of the scheme. The other half is too impracticable to consider. The second project is excellent in theory, but does not bear discussion at the present moment.

The summary punishment of criminal offences at the hands of an energetic and upright Vali would doubtless have its effect, but it is questionable whether the police force at the disposal of the Diarbekir Government at this moment is sufficient for the purpose. I say questionable, because there is a doubt. The Kurds are cowards, and a Governor who has shown a determination to check disorder has, even with the limited force at his command, been known to produce a very great change for the better in these disorderly districts.

It might be well if this serious state of things was brought to the notice of the Porte. There is no doubt that both Kurds and Arabs have been, for some time past, aware that they can do pretty much as they like. Neither one nor the other have any love for the Government, and if the present feeling be allowed to grow the Porte may find, leaving out of the question altogether the sufferings which such conduct causes to the law-abiding section of its subjects, both Moslem and Christian, that it would have been in every way a more economical policy to have nipped it at an earlier stage of its growth.

The country to the north-west of the city of Diarbekir is more prosperous and better cultivated than that on the eastern side. It is also quieter.

Of the Vilayet of Kharput, politically speaking, I have little to say, for I only travelled through a very small portion of it. It has a reputation for tranquillity at all times, and at this moment it is blessed with an energetic Governor, Hassan Bey, who, by strenuous personal exertions, has, I was told, succeeded in completing that portion of the new Kharput-Sivas road which lies in his district.

Having made no effort to rake up individual grievances, there is nothing to be reported on that score; but I may mention that there was a very general cry of complaint ringing through the country at the exactions and oppressions of the tax-farmers. In several villages I was shown small patches of vegetables and garden-stuff which had been assessed at values far in excess of the market price of the stock. Not only are such dealings glaringly unjust, but they are ruinous to the country, by tending to stamp out every attempt at enterprise or self-improvement on the part of the people.

Naturally, I could mention many other matters that obviously require attention : d reform. If I forbear, it is because the question has been so thoroughly exhausted

during the past five years, that it would be a work of supererogation to repeat them on the present occasion.

In conclusion, I must record the fact that I found all the vilayets very quiet. Throughout my journey, from one end to the other, I did not meet or see a single party of armed Kurds anywhere; nor did I hear that any highway robbery of importance had been committed during the summer.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM EVERETT,
Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan.

Inclosure 2 in No. 10.

Report on the Vilayet of Bitlis.

CONSTITUTION.

Sandjak.	Caza.	Christians.	Moslems.	Totals: Christians.	Totals: Moslems.
Mush	City and plain	45,238	27,527		
	Varto	2,610	4,677		
	Melazgerd	2,063	7,818		
	Bulanyk	16,960	6,335		
		..	..	66,871	46,157
Bitlis	City and environs, with Gar-zigan	25,284	20,684		
	Khizan	6,585	*		
	Modkan	2,184	8,200		
	Akhlat	5,234	397		
		..	..	39,287	29,281
Ocudj	Sassoun	5,957	3,045		
	Khulp	*	*		
	Jebakchour	4,875	11,000		
		..	..	10,839	14,045
Sert	Sherwan	5,231	15,674		
	Deh	6,658	6,029		
	Berwar	984	2,774		
	Kharzan	11,049	10,880		
	Redwan	11,496	8,237†		
		..	..	35,408	44,593
Total of Bitlis Vilayet		..	..	152,398	133,986

In the numerous Reports which during the last five years have been submitted to Her Majesty's Government, the political condition of the districts composing the new Vilayet of Bitlis has been more than once described, and the general tenour of these Reports has been invariably and eminently unfavourable.

Major Trotter, who visited some of them in 1880, represented the state of things as "utter disorganization" (No. 20 of 24th July, 1880), and mentions the Sandjak of Mush as the worst-governed in the whole country. Major Clayton, who was there a year later, speaks of the great poverty of the inhabitants and of the fanaticism of the Moslems, especially in the Plain of Mush (Inclosure 2 in No. 139, September 1880), while Mr. Eyres, in his Report, dated 4th January, 1884, drew a picture of anarchy and misgovernment which could not fail to cause grave apprehensions and much anxiety for the immediate future.

In considering the merits or demerits of the governing classes of any country, the normal condition of the inhabitants within the jurisdiction of the officials, the proportion in which different races and creeds are mixed, the effects of this combination, and the general disposition of the people for good or evil, are elements that cannot be neglected. In fact, it is not possible to form a true estimate of the value of a

* Numbers not known. † Including Yezids.

Government without taking into consideration the difficulties with which it has to contend.

I mention this, because there is sometimes a tendency to overlook it, and because men who find themselves located for a time in a turbulent district are very apt to judge the capacity of the Government by the amount of crime and disorder which is noticeable without reflecting on the causes which produce it.

That the Vilayet of Bitlis, as at present constituted, must ever be a particularly troublesome province to govern, is made evident on examining the nature of the country and the condition of the inhabitants.

To the north is the Sandjak of Mush, consisting of a magnificent plain inhabited almost entirely by Christians, surrounded by districts more or less mountainous, in which are large numbers of Kurds. Westward is the Sandjak of Gendj, a mountainous district, with a mixed population of Kurds and Christians. To the south is the Sandjak of Sert, also a mountainous district, containing a mixed sedentary population with a majority of Moslems, and during the summer months an influx of nomads entirely Kurdish. Between the Sandjaks of Mush and Sert, and right in the heart of the Taurus, is the central Sandjak of Bitlis with a mixed population, in which the Christians predominate, and a smaller but still considerable number of nomads.

It will be convenient to consider (1) the present state of the people, and (2) their condition when we first became acquainted with it, after which an estimate can be more easily formed of the progress or regress of the province.

The sedentary Kurds are grouped in "ashirets," or tribes. When these are large they bear a distinct name, the origin of which is hardly known to themselves, or the name of the district they inhabit; when small, they are called after their Chief.

The principal tribes are as follows:—

Sandjak.	Sub-District.	Tribe.	Remarks.
Mush	Bulanyk and Melazgerd ..	Hassananli*	Very powerful.
	,, ,, ..	Millanli,*	
	Khait	Khitli.*	
	Varto	Djebranli	85 villages (800 tents).
	,, ...	Bilikli	200 tents.
	,, ...	Musanli	50 ,,
	,, ...	Mamekanli	500 ,,
	,, ...	Seidanli	120 ,,
	,, ...	Barazli	150 ,,
Gendj	Petchar	No special names	18 villages. Zorn speaking.
	Hert		5 ,,
	Tavoos		18 ,,
	Gendj		32 ,,
	Yukhik		17 ,,
	Hazo		64 ,,
	Mihrani		23 ,,
	Kulp		25 ,,
	Havedan		18 ,,
	Bateksan		9 ,,
	Tchabaktchour ..		56 ,,
	Sassoun	Sassunli	Language Kermanji. Broken up into a number of small tribes.
Sert	Sherwan	Mahmedi	150 tents. Wealthy.
	,, ...	Storikan ,, ..	200 tents. Cruel and turbulent. Agha, Sherik.
	,, ...	Howedi	80 tents.
	,, ...	Siloghi	100 tents. Aghas, Kassim and Nadir. Bad reputation.
	Berwar	Berwari Kurds ..	600 houses. Language Kermanji.
	Deh	Deh Kurds.*	
	Kharzan and Beheri ..	Penjunr	400 families. Being no longer permitted to go to their yailas in Mush mountains, they built houses in Kharzan and the neighbourhood of Redwan. Chief Agha, Cheto, a brigand.
	,, ,, ..	Allenli	200 families. Pass summer near Mush. Chief, Petmar.
	,, ,, ..	Rashkotanli	300 tents. Chief, Moustakuto, a famous brigand, exiled by Abeddin Pasha, but since returned.
	,, ,, ..	Bekiranli	100 families.
Bitlis†	Modkant‡	Kossanli	190 ,,
	,, ...	Erikli	250 ,,
	,, ...	Turlowanli	158 ,,
	,, ...	Keboranli	70 ,,
	,, ...	Bobanli	160 ,,
	,, ...	(Nameless).	219 ,,

Intermingled with all these tribes are Christians. In the towns of Mush and Bitlis, including its environs and Garzigan, in the Plain of Mush, and in the districts of Akhlat, Bulanyk, Sassoun, Kharzan, and Redwan, they outnumber the Moslems. Taking the whole of the districts together, the number of Christians exceeds that of the Moslems by 18,412.

In spite of the great natural wealth of the country the population, except in the towns of Bitlis and Sert, appeared to me to be miserably poor. Among the Christians there is no dearth of provisions, nor of any of the necessities of life, except in some places—as, for example, the Plain of Mush of fuel. Even here there should be no want of this most necessary commodity, for plenty of wood is to be seen on the mountains in the vicinity; but the inhabitants of the plain dare not touch it, and they are too poor to buy, especially at the high prices which would be demanded by the Kurdish owners. They are therefore compelled, as in the other treeless districts of

* No information as to numbers.
† In the other sub-districts of this sandjak the Kurds are not tribal.
‡ For further information see Appendix.

Asia, to burn "tezek," a fuel composed of dried dung and chopped straw. If the Kurds were kept in order this difficulty would disappear. The Kurd wants grain, and if he could not, as he does now, procure it by robbery, he would doubtless be only too glad to bring down wood in exchange. At present he contents himself, except in the villages bordering on the plains, with sheep-farming and horse-breeding. Whatever else he may require he takes by force from the Christians. Nevertheless, except in the mountains south of the Mush Plain, he cannot plunder unrestrained the first Christian village he comes across. All the Christians in the mountains south of the Mush Plain are the serfs of Kurdish Aghas, who, in return for certain services, give them, or ought to give them, protection from the other tribes. Major Clayton, in a despatch (No. 33 of the 18th August, 1881) written after the completion of a tour through Sassoun, enumerates the conditions regulating the relations between the Kurdish Agha and the Christian serf. They are hard enough on the Christian, and betoken a complete state of serfage, becoming daily more irksome and unbearable by reason of the constant breaking up of the tribes into smaller fractions, and the consequent limited amount of protection that is received in return.

My belief is, however, that the state of these people, though worse than in former days, is better than that of the Christians of the plain, who have only the protection of the Government to fall back upon; for not only are these last liable to be plundered indiscriminately by every pillager (in which must be included Government officials, such as soldiers and zaptiehs), but they seldom, if ever, receive any satisfaction or recompense; whereas, as the following authentic story will show, some Kurdish Aghas still feel bound in honour, and in their rude and primitive fashion, to avenge the insults offered to their Christian serfs.

In 1877 there resided at the village of Hentenk, in the district of Sassoun, a certain Mugnerditch, a Christian, who was robbed on the road by two Bekiranli Kurds of his horse, money, &c., and of the shawl which it is the custom to wear round the waist. Appealing to his Agha, Hassan Farho, of Kabastik, the latter promptly set out to punish the offenders, and, at the risk of his own life, shot them, and restored to Mugnerditch not only all that had been taken from him, but also the arms and horses of the robbers. The shawl, however, Mugnerditch refused to take back, because the bullet of his Agha had pierced it in several places (one of the robbers having apparently put it round his own waist); and he even went so far as to tell him that he ought to have aimed better.

I have no doubt that many such stories might be collected illustrating the other side of the question, *i.e.*, an action more prompt to right his wrongs than any that the Christian of the plain ever sees taken by his lawful protector, the Government.

On the other hand, Major Clayton observes that in some districts the Aghas do not trouble themselves much about their serfs beyond collecting from them their dues, and he is probably correct. In fact, in proportion as the power of the Chiefs diminishes, either from the breaking up of the clans or from a firmer grasp on the part of the Government, such summary modes of punishment must of necessity cease. Unfortunately, there is very little to replace it; for not only are the weak and ill-paid forces of the Government unequal to the task, but, as has been remarked on many previous occasions, they are callous to the sufferings of the Christian, and, generally speaking, are directly interested in conniving with the Kurds.

Such being the state of things, it may readily be conceived that from this cause alone there is not much chance of an agriculturist putting aside much money. Much of what he gains by the sale of his produce passes into the hands of the tax-gatherer, while much of that produce itself is taken from him by the Kurd. His life is thus passed in endeavouring to keep up with the demands made upon him by these two classes, and it may reasonably be supposed that he is fairly contented if he succeeds in satisfying them, and is able to put by a small pittance for the future.

It is in the Plain of Mush especially where the greatest suffering is said to exist from these causes. Here a good deal of information was given me of the great sufferings which have to be daily endured by the Christians inhabiting these villages at the hands of the Kurds, which, if true, is as bad as anything that has hitherto been brought to my notice, but I omit to mention the details, as I had no opportunity of proving the statements. It is also fair to say that during the four days that I was in this neighbourhood, during which I traversed the plain from end to end, I never saw a single Kurdish brigand.

It is only in the town of Bitlis that a contrast to this picture of universal poverty presents itself, and it is as striking as it is strange. As the centre of the mohair trade of Kurdistan, this city exhibits a commercial activity that exceeds anything I have

hitherto witnessed in any Asiatic town of Turkey, Erzeroum included. There are 5,000 families in the town, of which 3,000 are of the Moslem religion and mostly of Kurdish nationality. The Christians are said to have numbered formerly 15,000 houses and to be constantly emigrating, but I did not see any signs of it, and believe the statement to be altogether incorrect. The whole population appeared to be thriving. Here as everywhere else in the vilayet great satisfaction was expressed at the dismissal of Aarifi Pasha, the late Vali; Fikri Pasha, his successor, appears to be an active and energetic officer. It is, perhaps, a little early to judge of his administration, but it was evident that during the very short time he has been at Bitlis he has not been idle. Already a new Mussulman school has been built, and thirteen hundred metres of a new and most necessary road from Bitlis to Sert has been completed, while he has caused a project to be submitted to him for rebuilding the prisons. Since his arrival the Kurds are said to be much quieter.

The Mutessarif of Mush is Salih Pasha, and from all sides I heard good accounts of him. He is the same officer who was governing Sert in 1880, and is well spoken of by Major Trotter (No. 20 of July 24th, 1880). The present Mutessarif of Sert is Suleiman Pasha, formerly Mutessarif of Baiburt, a pleasant man, but hardly equal to the situation. The principal resident of Sert is Hamid Agha, a man notorious for his oppressions of the Christians. He was exiled by Aleddin Pasha in 1879, but, like many others, has since returned with no very kindly feelings towards those who denounced him. Family prestige and considerable wealth contribute to his power, and it is generally asserted that the reins of Government are more often in his hands than in those of the Mutessarif. Be this as it may, the country appeared to be very quiet, nor did I hear that any flagrant act of robbery had been committed in the sandjak during the summer.

The machinery of the new Law Courts is at last at work, and the first Procureur-Général that Bitlis had ever seen arrived there last year. It can hardly be hoped that a system so entirely unsuited to the needs of the country should meet with much success, but nevertheless, it was well spoken of at Sert. Perhaps the contrast between the present state of things and that which obtained in the too long interval that elapsed between the subversion of the old system and the adoption of the new, during which there was no administration of justice at all, is so great as to produce, for the present at least, a satisfactory impression; possibly my informant was at fault, or perhaps by the judicious expenditure of a few liras he had recently gained some long-standing law-suit.

The Moslems in this vilayet, and especially towards the south, are said, and with some justice, to be fanatic. During the late war a desire manifested itself at Sert to massacre the Christians. It was averted through the exhortation of Sheikh Hamza,* a powerful and much venerated Kurdish Sheikh, who resides in the neighbourhood. Since then, I am told, a bitterer feeling has sprung up. The Moslems now look upon the Christians as the friends of their late enemies, and openly accuse them of collusion. The use of most opprobrious terms is frequent; beating is also not unusual, but more serious still is the obstruction placed in the way of the erection of Christian schools. At Sert, the late Mufti was the leader of this fanatical section. Much to the relief of the Christians, he was dismissed last year for endeavouring to excite the populace to resist the orders of the Government with respect to the taking of the recent census, but their position is not much more secure. A revival of religious feeling has lately shown itself among the Moslems of Sert. It is confined at present to a strong desire on the part of several of their number to assume the title of Sheikh. In quiet times this amounts to letting the beard grow, wearing a green turban, and indulging in attacks of frenzy after evening prayers on Fridays. But should events productive of religious excitement occur in the future these men will form a dangerous stimulating nucleus, and, should the Government be compelled at such a moment to draw off the garrison, it will probably go hard with Christians who may at that epoch find themselves at Sert or in the villages in the neighbourhood.

Speaking of the Kurdish Sheikhs, Mr. Taylor says in a Report, dated the 22nd August, 1861, that they are the greatest curses of the country, and that their houses are the centres of every insurrection and intrigue. "These fanatics," he says, "are scattered all over the country, and the Kurds and most of the minor Turkish officials pay them the most unwonted reverence and respect. They have an implacable hatred of the Christian, and instigate the Moslems to any acts that may contribute to their annoyance or loss. In cases of dispute between Rayn and Moslem, a word from them

* This man is very liberal minded, and altogether different to the Kurdish Sheikhs described further on.

is sufficient to stay the course of justice, and insure the success of the Moslem, however trumpery and unfounded the claim may be."

Such is the general state of this country at the present day. Years ago, when our Consuls first came out, they do not appear to have taken much interest in the condition of the people, but we may gather what it was from the form of government which existed, and from the events which were then passing in the districts.

One of the first Reports on this country which ever reached England is probably that written by Consul Brant in 1839, after a journey made through the same province. Mush was then a semi-independent Pashalik, ruled by a certain Emin Pasha, a Kurd, whose fathers before him had governed the country, with few interruptions, for a considerable period. Fighting appears to have been his principal occupation, and just previous to Mr. Brant's visit he had conducted successfully two important military enterprises. In the first place, he had fought against and defeated the Persian Kurds, who had invaded the country; and secondly, he had fought with, and reduced to subjection, the Begs of Bitlis. Bitlis, therefore, at that moment was a dependency of Mush, and Emin Pasha had placed his brother, Sherif Bey, there as Governor. The position of Emin Pasha appeared to be very unsatisfactory. In lieu of revenues, he paid a subsidy to the Seraskier of Erzeroum, which consisted of 6,000 purses (£T. 30,000) per annum. But he seems to have been, to a certain extent, dependent for his position on Hafiz Pasha, the Military Governor of Kharput, and was, at the time Mr. Brant was there, in great trepidation lest he should be deprived by him of his Pashalik; at the same time, he was making secret preparations to resist any attempt to depose him.

Hafiz Pasha had just been endeavouring to subdue the Khazan Kurds. In fact, the whole country seems at that time to have been the scene of internecine struggles and party warfare, and full of fighting men, regular and irregular, Turk and Kurd, who lived upon the people, and had reduced them to a state of abject poverty, which is often alluded to by Mr. Brant.

In addition to these impositions, the Christians of that day were obliged to receive into their villages, during the whole of the winter months, all Kurds who had no dwellings of their own. The Kurds paid to the Seraskier of Erzeroum a tax called "kishlak" (wintering) for this privilege, but the Christian got absolutely no compensation, and it may readily be conceived how terribly the burden weighed upon him. Besides these evils, there was in those days a tax called "salian" on property, &c., which was paid by Christians alone, and which amounted in the Plain of Mush to £T. 2,000 per annum.

According to this Report, the town of Mush consisted then of 700 Moslem and 945 Christian families. Bitlis, too, in spite of the reports of emigration to which I have alluded above, has increased in size; for in Mr. Brant's day we find only 2,000 Mahommedan and 1,000 Christian families against the 5,000 houses of the present epoch.

It is not until 1861 that I can find any further allusion to this part of the country.

It was then visited, evidently at the request of our Consul, by Mr. Trowbridge, an American missionary, who had been for many years in the country. He reports rather favourably, and, speaking of Mush, remarks that there was at that time much less danger to travellers than ten or even five years ago, while Kurdish raiding had greatly decreased. On the other hand, bribery had greatly increased.

In 1863 Mush was visited by Mr. Taylor. It was then a Mutessariflik of the Vilayet of Erzeroum, and included, besides the central sub-province, the four Kaimakamliks of Bitlis, Melazgert, Akhlat, and Bulanyk. The old system had disappeared entirely, and, says Mr. Taylor, both town and plain were in a thriving condition. Going there again in 1869 he found a change for the worse. The most important reason for the increase of poverty he says is the "Kishlak," but as we have seen, this had been in existence ever since Brant's time, and, therefore, could hardly be said to influence the particular period to which Mr. Taylor refers. Another reason adduced is the increase of oppression from marauders. This he attributes to the influence of the Sheikhs who had been stirring up fanaticism, in consequence of which the Kurds during the previous summer had grown so bold as to have actually stormed and plundered the ancient monastery of Sourp Garabed. Lastly, he brings forward the great loss of produce occasioned by the dilatory proceedings of the tithe farmers, and the very marked diminution in the cultivation of tobacco owing to the introduction of the monopoly tax.

As regards the numbers of the inhabitants, Mr. Taylor says that in the town of Mush

there were 2,000 families. He further estimated the number of Moslems and Christians as follows:—

	Moslems.	Christians.
In the town and its vicinity	7,000	6,000
In the plain	9,000	12,000
Total	16,00	18,000

With regard to the town, therefore, we see that since Mr. Brant's time there had been a steady growth. Taking Mr. Taylor's figures together we have 34,000 souls against 72,000 of to-day, showing, even allowing for inaccuracy of figures, a very large increase in the population all round, but more especially among the Christians.

Briefly comparing the state of the people with what it was in the past we find with regard to the Kurds that, though they are still unruly and given to pillage, their power against the State has been in the last half-century entirely broken. Year by year the ties which bind them together become looser. Year by year the old and powerful families break up into impotent fragments. The feuds of chieftains, which in the old days convulsed the country, are now replaced by a hundred petty quarrels among their descendants, the only effect of which is to still further destroy the bond of union which once existed between their forefathers.

Evidently, it would not be difficult for a determined Government and an efficient Gendarmerie to complete a task which has been more than half accomplished without either one or the other.

The Christians, as we have seen, may be classed in two categories, viz., the Christian of the mountain and the Christian of the plain. The former is a serf, the latter nominally free, but liable to greater exactions than the former. The position of the Christians of the mountain is worse than in former times with respect to protection, while that of the Christian of the plain is better, since raiding and pillage is not carried on now either to the same extent or on so large a scale. The wholesale sacking of villages and monasteries is probably, in this particular vilayet, a thing of the past, so long as the garrisons can be maintained in the country, and nothing occurs to fan the smouldering embers of fanaticism into flame. And though, in accordance with long-standing custom, the Christians are compelled to comply with the demands made upon them by the Kurds, precluding, as has been demonstrated, the possibility of a more prosperous condition, I am quite persuaded that they have not so much to complain of now as they had even twenty years ago. Moreover, and this applies equally to all Christians, the weight of the Kishlak and the Salian has been removed from their backs, and it is impossible for them not to feel the burden lighter. And they do, and will honestly allow it if the question be put to them.

There is only one conclusion then that can be impartially drawn from the facts which have been recorded above, viz., that the inhabitants of the districts which now form the Vilayet of Bitlis have to a certain extent emerged from the state of barbarism in which they were wrapt. In order to effect this partial improvement a complete change in administration was found necessary. In fact, the feudal system was abruptly superseded by a nineteenth century form of Government, which very naturally none of the people can either understand or appreciate. Just now the good old times of the Kurdish Begs are not only spoken of, but fresh in the memory of every middle-aged man; and though the form of government has disappeared, the habits, customs, and associations still remain. Further, it is only of late years that any education has been introduced even into the most civilized portions of these districts, while in the mountainous parts it is as yet altogether unknown. Thus the men who form the class of minor officials, such as members of local Councils, &c., are altogether unfit for their posts. It follows that, however energetic a Turkish Governor may be, he is but very badly represented in the districts; in fact, the machinery at his command is of the poorest make. It is not possible that the 200 or 300 ill-paid zaptiehs at his disposal, themselves taken from the very people who have been so lately brought into subjection, could, even if they wished to, keep in order their unruly brethren who now, as sheep without a shepherd, inhabit the mountains. Much has been done; but to give perfect security for life and property, to free the Christian serfs, to educate the people, and to open up the country, a far stronger Government is required than that which now exists, backed and supported by an intelligent and

educated body of minor officials. No one knows this better than the Governor, but the initiative clearly rests with the Porte.

Erzeroum, January 30, 1885.

Inclosure 3 in No. 19.

Report on the Vilayet of the Deyrsim.

MY only object in visiting the Deyrsim on the present occasion being to reach Erzingan from Kharput by the shortest route, I had neither time nor opportunity to obtain the information necessary for the preparation of a complete Report on this interesting district; but seeing that Her Majesty's Government has already in the excellent notice furnished by the late Colonel Stewart in 1882 very thorough information as to the tribes and Aghas, their feelings and peculiarities, it would in any case be only a work of supererogation to go over the ground again, unless it were found possible either to supplement the information already given or correct it.

Owing to the lateness of the season I was obliged also to leave Khozat unvisited, the road from that place to Erzingan being already closed by the snow. I therefore proceeded by Mazgerd, Kizilkilissa, and Kozlitchan. I was the more sorry to have to take this route, because I should have liked to see the improvements which are said to have been made in Khozat by Fikri Pasha, the late Vali (see my Report of the 2nd February, 1884).

The turbulent and independent nature of the Deyrsimli Kurds is too well known to need description. Located in a country, which from its mountainous character enabled them always to make a good defence when attacked, they have managed, at least in the Deyrsim proper, to maintain a semi-independence to the present day.

The last great effort to subdue them was made by Dervish Pasha in 1879, but he did not succeed in effecting anything of a substantial character. Still the Deyrsim is not in the same state of insubordination as it was twenty or even fifteen years ago.

The last time that it was visited by a Consular officer was in 1869, when Mr. Taylor made some stay there. It was then quite independent, and governed by two or three Chiefs, of whom the two most powerful were Gulabi Agha in the Deyrsim proper, and Hussein Bey in Kozlitchan.*

In 1872 or 1873 Gulabi Agha consented to come to an understanding with the Government, but his submission cost him his life, and in the same year he was assassinated. He left two sons, Kassim Agha and Hussein Bey (this man must not be confused with Hussein Bey of Kozlitchan). The latter seems to have followed in the footsteps of his father, as we find him shortly afterwards Kaïmakam of Mazgerd.

In the Orajik, and contemporary with Gulabi Agha, Gangonin Oglou, Yussuf Agha or Yusuf the son of Gango, was the most powerful Chief. About the time of the death of Gulabi the Deyrsim was made a Mutessarifilik with Khozat as the seat of Government. This unpopular innovation marks the first successful effort of the Turks to establish a form of authority in the country.

Slow in action, and apparently too weak to enter the district and remain there, and so crush at once and for ever the power of the Chiefs; the Turks appear, nevertheless, to have appreciated the difficulties of the question, and, while adopting a policy suitable to the means at their disposal, to have arrived at a very just conclusion as to the manner in which it could best be solved.

Thus they understood perfectly that all attempts at subjection must be made from the south and east. This conclusion was dictated by the topography of the country. It was palpable to them that the great barrier of mountains which lines the left bank of the Western Euphrates from Erzingan to Arabkir would form an insurmountable obstacle to any undertaking of a permanent nature. Closed by deep snows for nearly six months of the year, garrisons depending on the northern division at Erzingan for reinforcements and supplies could neither be maintained nor supported. On the other side of these mountains, the ground, ever difficult but ever falling, trends away till the southern boundary of the district is reached on the banks of the Eastern Euphrates only a few hours from Kharput. It was, therefore, to the Kharput division that the duty of a gradual advance was allotted, while the mountains to the north and east and the strong division beyond them at Erzingan were to form a barrier of retention, which together should effectually prevent any aggression or escape

* For names and divisions of districts, &c., see Colonel Stewart's Report of August 22, 1882.

on those sides. But the western frontier adjoining Keghi and Kozlitchan still remained comparatively unguarded. In order to close the gap, operations both of a military and diplomatic character appear to have been carried on simultaneously.

The most powerful Chief of the tract of country between the Murad Su (Eastern Euphrates) and Mazgird was and is Izaak Pasha of Pashkevank. This man is notorious for his cruelties, especially to Christians, ought long ago to have been punished for his numerous and heinous crimes, and no doubt would have been if his presence in the country had not been necessary to the scheme of subjection which occupied the attention of the authorities. A more excellent tool could not have been found. His violent temper and unprincipled character led him daily to commit excesses, and his proximity to Kharput enabled the Government to call him to account for them. By alternately petting and threatening him he was soon detached from the other Chiefs, and troops were pushed up through his country.

The northern part of the western frontier was occupied by Hussein Bey and the Kozlitchanlis. I am not aware in what manner he was persuaded to secede from the Deyrsim league, but, at all events, in 1881, when the Deyrsim was erected into a vilayet, he was appointed Kaïmakam in his own country.

As far north as Mazgird, on the one hand, therefore, and as far south as the southern boundary of Kozlitchan on the other, friendly districts were obtained and small garrisons were established at Mazgird in the south and at Polemur in Kozlitchan. Between these limits lies a tract of mountainous, and in some parts well wooded, country, which, belonging to the Deyrsim proper, is inhabited by disaffected Kurds. It is probably about 35 miles broad from north to south. For the purpose of bridging over this unfriendly portion of the frontier two military posts were established, the larger one at Kizilkilissa, a convenient locality, half-way between Mazgird and Hertef, an Armenian village on the frontier of Kozlitchan, the smaller one at the village of Pakh, between Mazgird and Kizilkilissa.

The next and last step was to convert the Deyrsim into a vilayet, and the wisdom of it is open to criticism. Not only is the country too small to constitute a province of the first rank, but the large quantity of uncultivated land due to the mountainous nature of the country implies a small revenue. The introduction of a larger number of more highly paid officials necessarily diminishes still further this revenue, while the gain to the Porte is *nil*. In the opinion of those who know the country best, the Deyrsim should be a Mutessarifilik attached to Kharput, and the Governor should be a military man of a certain rank.

It is evident from the foregoing remarks that the condition of the Deyrsim is very much changed, and that, provided there is no necessity to withdraw the garrisons, it is not the thorn in the side of the Government that it used to be. The Kurds are now in a ring fence, from which they would find it difficult to break out, and in the meantime a certain amount of civilization and trade is being pushed up into the interior via Mazgird and Khozat. At the former place there is now a small bazaar (ten years ago there was not a vestige of a shop), at which the Kurds are learning to buy the few things that they need. At Kizilkilissa it was surprising to find wide roads planted with avenues of young poplars, well kept and tended. The improvements here are, I believe, due to the energy of Colonel Ahmed Bey, the Commandant, who seems to be for once the right man in the right place.

The position of the garrison is not enviable. It is impossible for small parties of soldiers to traverse the country between this advanced post and Hertef, or, in fact, to go out of gunshot of the camp. Being obliged to procure a fresh escort here I was given thirty men and an officer, and on several occasions on the road to Hertef the officer begged me not to march ahead of the soldiers, and to wait for the baggage. I do not for a moment believe that so large a party was necessary for my safety, but rather that a smaller number of soldiers were afraid to return by themselves. At Hertef I asked to be allowed to take a couple of men on with me to Kozlitchan, but the officer declared that it would be impossible for them to return alone. He assured me, however, that there would be no further necessity for an escort as Kozlitchan was perfectly quiet, and I found this to be the case.

These details gauge with sufficient accuracy to what point the Government has arrived. Generally speaking, it may be assumed that the Government have the upper hand, and are able, though with a certain amount of difficulty, to collect the revenues and enforce laws that are not especially distasteful in all the sub-districts except in the Deyrsim proper. Here there is still, if not open rebellion, at least a stubborn resistance to Turkish authority, which, with time and patience, will, I think, give way.

It would be unprofitable to make any long statement as to what is wanted in the

Deyrsim to improve the country and satisfy the people; briefly, everything is wanting. In such a country the principal wealth lies in the value of its minerals, and these for the present remain untouched. What money there is in the country is in the hands of the Chiefs, the general population being excessively poor.

If the country were opened up and labour given to these thousands of poverty-stricken inhabitants, then, no doubt, the people would be contented enough, and, I believe, would make most excellent subjects. For the moment it is sufficient to note that so long as the present hold is maintained on the district there is no great danger of the Deyrsim Kurds causing serious trouble to the Government.

Erzeroum, January 30, 1885.

Inclosure 4 in No. 19.

Notes on the Sub-district of Modkan.[a]

MODKAN, a sub-district of the Vilayet of Bitlis, is situated to the westward of the town of that name, and in the heart of the mountains that are considered as forming the eastern limit of the chain of the Taurus.

It is therefore unnecessary to say anything regarding the character of the country, except that the mountains are here and there well wooded, that the steep-sided valleys are often of extreme beauty and fertility, and that it is throughout well watered.

In extent it is inconsiderable, 30 miles in the direction of the main chain by 20 across covering the whole of it.

The population may be divided into two categories, viz., settled Kurds and Armenians.

At a remote epoch, judging from the large number of ruined churches that are to be found throughout the district, the Christians must have formed a very considerable community. Gradually their numbers dwindled, from emigration and other causes, until they numbered about 4,000 souls. This was twenty years ago. Emigration still continued, and in 1880 their numbers did not exceed 2,184.

The Kurdish tribes of Modkan are five in number, viz., Erikli, Kossanli, Tarlowanli, Keboranli, and Bobanli. Each tribe has two or three Chiefs or Aghas, and each Agha has under his command a band of fighting men, who may, for want of a better word, be termed brigands. So long as the Government can maintain a garrison in the district the Kurds are quiet enough, but should it at any time be withdrawn they immediately break out. Thus, at the commencement of the last war they celebrated the occasion of the troops leaving for Bitlis by burning the barracks immediately after their departure; and as soon as the fighting began, and the garrisons had been still further withdrawn, they gathered together 200 or 300 men, and after having plundered the villages in the neighbourhood of Bitlis prepared for an attack upon the town itself, and were only prevented from sacking it by the timely arrival of cavalry from Mush.

Their character is cruel, and their disposition rebellious. Their arms consist principally of rifled matchlocks; powder and shot they obtain from Bitlis and Sert.

The condition of the few remaining Christians is much the same as in all the other mountain districts of this neighbourhood, *i.e.*, they are serfs, pure and simple.

The names and number of the villages, the number of the population, chief Aghas, and other particulars, are shown in the subjoined statement.

I wish to draw particular attention to these figures. In the Table of statistics forwarded by Major Clayton in 1881 the number of Christians in Modkan is put down at 6,779, and that of the Kurds at 4,800. I believe I am right in saying that Major Clayton obtained his figures from Armenian sources, but at all events he did not enter the district himself. The very great difference in the statistics now forwarded is striking, and leads one to doubt the accuracy of those figures we have already obtained for the more inaccessible districts of this country.

[a] From notes taken in 1880 by Yusuf Effendi, Dragoman to the Consulate.

Statistics of Modkan.

Nationality.	Villages.	Remarks.
Erikli Kurds (tribal)	Jeman 40 houses .. .. Erik 50 „ Dillek 1 „ Sersor 10 „ Kurtian 30 „ Dulek 10 „ Golonnes 100 „ Shemil 17 „	Aghas of the Erikli— Bazonin Oglou Facho. Farbanin Oglou Silli. Reshonin Oglou Deadin. Of these three Silli treats the Christians better than the other two. 60 to 70 brigands.
Kossanli Kurds (tribal)	Mermend, 80 houses; ruined church. Nieh (mixed village); 40 Kurdish, 14 Armenian houses. Tabril, 12 houses; two ruined churches, one used as a sheep-fold, the other as a hay-loft. Meidan, 19 Kurdish houses, 1 Armenian house. Shen, 30 houses; ruined church.	Aghas of the Kossanli— Hassenin Oglou Delo. Chatonin Oglou Mousa. Bodenin Oglou Nano } Very cruel and great robbers. Resonin Oglou Razanzan } Number of brigands, 60 to 70.
Tarlowanli Kurds (tribal)	Jeman, 10 houses. .. .. Kerkosh, 5 houses. Sulmusor, 9 houses; ruined church. Meka, 16 houses; ruined church. Kurdelgan, 20 houses. Begderol, 3 houses. Sheralan, 2 houses. Badinan, 5 houses. Gedemiran, 3 houses. Kossenk, ruined village and church. Irak, 8 houses; ruined church. Tadirek, 5 houses. Kessk, ruins. Girpuse, 25 houses; ruined church. Totran, 6 houses. Erghian, 30 houses. Tunebeck, 10 houses; ruined church. Evisert, 1 house; ruined church.	Agha— Abonin Oglou Yeko. Two famous brigands, Djemanli Issenin Oglou Nouri and his brother Hassan belong to this tribe
Keboranli Kurds (tribal) ..	Kelhook, 30 houses .. .. Keboran, 25 houses; ruined church. Serkani, 15 houses.	Agha— Kelhookli Hozé. A few brigands.
Bobanli Kurds (tribal)	Arsan, 40 houses; ruined church. Torkh, 50 houses; ruined church. Kerbo (mixed), 5 Kurdish and 30 Christian houses. Agvaspi, 16 houses. Sekat, 20 houses; ruined church. Ashkadar, 17 Kurdish, 2 Christian houses.	Aghas— Ibenin Oglou Halil. Mahmoudin Oglou Faki. Halonin Oglou Jindo. A few brigands.
Kurds (casteless)	Batilmaz, 15 houses; ruined church. Tadean, 55 houses. Osni, 20 houses; ruined church. Oghos 12 houses. Gorun 40 „ Terkaunk 15 „ Serkani 5 „ Meeré 6 „ Zizan 8 „ Zender 20 „ Ziaret 20 „ Taphé 3 „	

N.B.—The whole of the Kurds can put into the field from 700 to 800 fighting men.

ARMENIANS.

Villages.	Families, 20 years ago.	Families, in 1880.	Villages.	Families, 20 years ago.	Families, in 1880.
Pertenk	22	10	Kerho	50	30
Mezrek	18	7	Nieh	50	11
Ors-ank	15	5	Pognot	25	8
Nezit	25	9	Mirs-ank	35	3
Meritakh	25	4	Missor	25	1
Hartootakh	13	7	Shenik	110	40
Hor	24	9	Cherto	20	10
Spangulyar	26	7	Trell	13	6
Spangi-siffla	25	12			243
Kanzo	30	20	In other villages ..	..	3
Kashakh	30	20			
Mep	16	12	Total	..	246
Herpeh	25	12			

GENERAL TABLE.

	Families.	Souls.
Tribal Kurds—		
Erikli	256	2,048
Kossanli	190	1,520
Tarlowanli	158	1,264
Kebernali	70	560
Bobanli	148	1,184
Nameless Kurds	219	1,752
	1,041	8,328
Armenians	246	1,968
Total population	..	10,296

No. 20.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received March* 28.)

(No. 158.)
Constantinople, March 23, 1885.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Biliotti reporting a conversation with Aziz Pasha, the Vali of Trebizond, respecting the judicial administration of that vilayet.

The appointment of circuit Judges who would make regular tours of inspection throughout the vilayet would seem to be, both in the opinion of Aziz Pasha and Mr. Biliotti, the only means of relieving the poor classes, who, for the present, have little chance of ever obtaining justice, as their Judges are chosen from the very classes by which they are most oppressed.

I therefore thought it advisable to submit the above suggestion to the consideration of the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs, and I expressed the opinion at the same time that should the proposal be adopted, it would be well that the circuit Judges should be sent from Constantinople.

His Excellency replied that as the institution of circuit Judges did not exist in Turkey the duties of such functionaries would, under the present system, devolve upon the inspectors of the provincial Tribunals; and he added that as that post at Trebizond was now held by a very active and competent official, he would move the Minister of Justice to direct him to make a tour of inspection through the vilayet, with a view to bringing about any reforms in the administration of justice by the local Tribunals which might appear to be necessary.

In order that this question may not be lost sight of, I have furnished Assim Pasha with a *pro-memorid* containing the substance of the concluding portion of Mr. Biliotti's despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Consul Biliotti to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 4.)
Trebizond, January 17, 1885.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that Aziz Pasha departed three days since for Ordoo, Fatza, and Uniah, on board the revenue sloop "Ziveri-Deria," placed at his disposal by the Porte.

He delayed his departure for a few days in order to watch the election of new Judges, and so managed it that the persons appointed are those whose character offers as much security as possible for the conscientious discharge of their duties.

On his arrival here he inspected the Courts of Justice, and informed them that they should not consider themselves entirely independent on the Vali; and that though he would not interfere with details he was bound to see that justice should be rendered, and that they should diligently carry out their duties.

The immediate consequence of this admonition, which produced the most favourable impression on the public, was that cases which in ordinary times would have taken up two or three weeks were settled within as many days.

Aziz Pasha laments at the want of prestige of the Government, which he has witnessed on the occasion of the forementioned elections. It seems that it was hinted to him by members of the Administrative Council that his rejection of certain influential parties would damage his position as Vali.

He also pointed out to me that the late panic at Uniah, in which no steps whatever were taken by the local authorities to ascertain whether Lazes or natives were the assailants, is an evident proof of the inefficient condition of the administration.

He having furthermore expressed the opinion that natives at large have as much to suffer from Lazes as from local grandees, I replied that what I had witnessed myself during my journeys in those and other districts, especially in 1880 (reference to my Nos. 30, 32, 33, 37, 38, 45, 48, 49, and 50 of that year), so much bore out this fact that I considered circuit Judges to be the only means to relieve the poor classes, who at present do not dare to lodge claims, the very parties against whom they have most to complain being at the same time their Judges.

Aziz Pasha said that though he already had unsuccessfully made the recommendation of a similar institution for other vilayets, he would try to induce the Porte to adopt it in the case of this province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 21.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received April* 8.)

(No. 159. Confidential.)
Constantinople, March 24, 1885.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 56, Confidential, of the 4th February last, I had the honour to inform your Lordship that I had made representations to the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs respecting the arrest by Djemil Pasha of Mr. Dallal, and had requested his Excellency to use his best endeavours to obtain that gentleman's release.

As your Lordship will remember, Assim Pasha stated, in reply, that as long as Djemil Pasha remained in office any action taken by the Sublime Porte in Mr. Dallal's behalf would probably only aggravate his position, but that he would consult with the Minister of the Interior as to the best course to be pursued under the circumstances.

I recently reverted again to the subject, and asked Assim Pasha whether any steps had been taken in the matter. In reply, his Excellency expressed his regret that he had entirely forgotten to mention the circumstance to Edhem Pasha, and begged me to furnish him with a *pro-memorid* setting forth the facts of the case.

I have complied with his Excellency's request, and have earnestly begged him not to lose sight of this matter, which has caused the greatest consternation amongst the Christian population of Aleppo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 22.

Earl Granville to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 128.) *Foreign Office, April* 10, 1885.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 154 of the 21st ultimo, inclosing Reports by Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum on the Vilayets of Bitlis and Dersim, and I have to instruct you to thank Colonel Everett for these interesting papers.

I am, &c.

(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 23.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received April* 14.)

(No. 64.) *Constantinople, April* 14, 1885.

(Telegraphic.)

EVERETT telegraphs his house entered by robbers night of 12th. Himself wounded in several places, leg broken. Authorities active, robber captured. He has ordered Devey to return from Van, and stop pending other arrangements. I could send Lamb, Van, to act temporarily, or Barnham from Angora, making temporary arrangement there; please instruct.

No. 24.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received April* 22.)

(No. 202.) *Constantinople, April* 11, 1885.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to state that on the 29th November last I communicated to the Porte a *pro-memorid* based upon a despatch which I had received from Mr. Consul Biliotti, transmitted to your Lordship in my despatch No. 435 of the 29th November, on the subject of the state of affairs in Lazistan.

I have now been informed by the Porte, upon the authority of the local officials of the vilayet, that as fast as the brigands fall into the hands of the authorities they are punished with the utmost rigour of the law; that the articles stolen from the church of Kodourtchour have been restored to their rightful owners, with the exception of a few which are retained pending satisfactory proof being given of their ownership; and finally, that justice is being properly administered, and that there is no foundation for the complaints which have been preferred upon this head.

I have informed Mr. Consul Biliotti of the tenour of the Porte's reply.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 25.

Mr. Wyndham to Earl Granville.—(*Received April* 25, 8·30 P.M.)

(No. 79.) *Constantinople, April* 25, 1885, 4·25 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

EVERETT progressing most favourably.

No. 26.

Earl Granville to Sir W. White.

(No. 45.) *Foreign Office, April* 28, 1885, 4 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

SAUL DUEK telegraphs from Aleppo complaining of arrest and ill-treatment by gendarmes.

Who is he, and what are circumstances?

No. 27.

Sir W. White to Earl Granville.—(*Received April* 29, 2·41 P.M.)

(No. 86.) *Constantinople, April* 29, 1885, 1·27 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

EVERETT progressing favourably. If news continues satisfactory shall not telegraph again.

No. 28.

Sir W. White to Earl Granville.—(*Received May* 6.)

(No. 239.) *Constantinople, April* 28, 1885.

My Lord,

WITH reference to the Earl of Dufferin's despatch No. 222 of the 28th July last year, I have the honour to state that Mr. Richards, British Vice-Consul at Mosul, has reported to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad that it has been decided not to insist upon taking the census of the female population of Mosul, as public opinion was strongly opposed to the adoption of such a measure.

Mr. Richards further states that a poll-tax of 1 piastre is being levied on every male registered.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 29.

Earl Granville to Consul-General Eldridge.

Foreign Office, May 6, 1885, 7·20 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

DO what you properly can to prevent or delay sale of premises of Blind School attached to British Syrian Schools. Communicate with Her Majesty's Minister at Constantinople if you require support.

No. 20.

Consul-General Eldridge to Earl Granville.—(*Received May* 9, 8 A.M.)

Beyrout, May 8, 1885, 10·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of 6th instant, I find, on inquiry, that the land on which the School for the Blind stands has been advertised for sale by a pretender to the property. The case is before the competent Court.

I will report details by post, and ask for assistance in case of need.

No. 31.

Earl Granville to Consul-General Eldridge.

Foreign Office, May 11, 1885, 2·40 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

INFORM Mr. Mott, who has telegraphed about Blind School, what is being done to stop sale.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 32.

The Armenian Patriarch to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Marquis of Salisbury by Musurus Pasha, August 13.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le* 10 *Août*, 1885.

JE me fais un devoir de prévenir votre Excellence que M. Agopian, signataire de la lettre datée du 6 Juillet à sa Seigneurie Lord Salisbury, n'a reçu et ne pouvait recevoir aucun mandat de parler au nom des Arméniens de Turquie, qui sont heureux d'être les fidèles sujets de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

No. 33.

Assim Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Marquis of Salisbury by Musurus Pasha, August 13.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le* 10 *Août*, 1885.

AGOPIAN, qui a toujours cherché à faire parler de lui, a profité du changement du Ministère Anglais pour adresser à Lord Salisbury une lettre de félicitations dans laquelle il a demandé au nom de ses coreligionnaires le concours et l'intervention de sa Seigneurie pour l'introduction de réformes en Anatolie. Il a fait ensuite publier sa lettre dans les journaux, ainsi que la réponse qu'il a reçue de Lord Salisbury.

Votre Excellence sait qu'Agopian est un homme de rien. Le Patriarcat Arménien lui-même a cru devoir déclarer spontanément qu'il désavouait sa démarche et ne lui reconnait aucune qualité pour parler au nom de la communauté Arménienne.

Comme, cependant, en répondant à Agopian, Lord Salisbury semble lui avoir donné de l'importance, votre Excellence ferait bien d'édifier sa Seigneurie sur Agopian et la mettre en garde contre de pareilles tentatives, que tous les Arméniens désapprouvent.

No. 34.

Mr. Hagopian to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received November 9.)

My Lord, 24, *Letterstone Road, Fulham, London, November* 9, 1885.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the inclosed appeal, signed by Armenian residents in England, praying that Her Majesty's Government would be pleased to take advantage of the present favourable opportunity to bring forward the Armenian question.

I beg leave to add that I have reason to believe from the reply given by M. de Freycinet to the Armenian deputation that waited on him, that, in the event of this question being brought forward, the French Government would support our claims.

I was intended to present this appeal to your Lordship by means of a deputation; but taking into consideration the numerous and pressing calls there must be on your Lordship's time in the present state of public affairs, we thought that it would be more agreeable to your Lordship as well as deferential in ourselves to forward it under cover.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN.

Inclosure in No. 34.

Memorial.

To the Most Noble the Marquis of Salisbury, K.G., Prime Minister, and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

My Lord, *London, November* 4, 1885.

IN presence of recent events in South-Eastern Europe, when the question of the maintenance or modification of certain clauses of the Berlin Treaty having reference

to Bulgaria has become the subject of active communications between the Signatory Powers, and a Conference is assembling to reconsider the settlement arrived at in 1878, we, Armenian residents in England, who have so often and so successfully drawn the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the continued infringement of that portion of the above Treaty which relates to Armenia, cannot remain unmoved or indifferent.

We therefore beg to express our firm hope that Her Majesty's Government, which has always shown deep concern and warm sympathy with the hard lot of the Christian populations of Armenia, through the non-execution of the LXIst Article of the above Treaty, would be pleased to take such steps, in common with the other Great Powers, as to ensure its due observance by the Ottoman Porte, which, in the present crisis, has been the first to protest against an infringement of the same Treaty by its own subjects.

In making this appeal to Her Majesty's Government at this juncture for and in behalf of the Armenian nation, we are not only discharging what we deem to be our sacred duty towards our unhappy countrymen in Armenia, but are, at the same time, acting in complete harmony and accord with our countrymen living on the continent of Europe, and particularly with those residing in France, who have just made a similar representation as this to the French Government. And, my Lord, we have every confidence that, should your Lordship direct that active steps be taken in this respect, the British Government will find itself adequately seconded and supported by all the Great Powers of Europe, who, on every principle of humanity and justice, cannot remain mere spectators at the long-suffering patience evinced by our countrymen under the severest trials and provocations caused by the non-execution of one of the Articles of a Treaty to which they are themselves High Contracting Parties.

We have, &c.
(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN
(And 33 others.)

No. 35.

Sir J. Pauncefote to Mr. Hagopian.

Foreign Office, November 18, 1885.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, inclosing a Memorial signed by Armenian residents in England, praying that advantage may be taken of the Conference now sitting at Constantinople to bring forward the Armenian question.

I am to state that the Memorial will be forwarded to Her Majesty's Representative at Constantinople, who will bear the matter in mind; but that it would be premature to decide at this moment whether the question can advantageously be brought forward during the present Conference, which has been summoned exclusively for the discussion of the questions connected with Eastern Roumelia.

I am, &c,
(Signed) JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

No. 36.

The Marquis of Salisbury to Sir W. White.

(No. 432.) *Foreign Office, November* 18, 1885.

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a letter from Mr. Hagopian,* inclosing a Memorial, signed by Armenian residents in London, praying that advantage may be taken of the Conference now sitting at Constantinople to bring forward the Armenian question. I also inclose copy of the reply which has been returned to this communication.† It would be premature to decide at this moment whether the question can advantageously be brought forward during the sitting of the present Conference, which has been summoned exclusively for the discussion of the questions connected with Eastern Roumelia; but I have to request that you will bear the matter in mind, and in case you

* No. 34. † No. 35.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

should see a prospect of urging the complaints and claims of the Armenian subjects of the Sultan with any useful result, I shall be glad to receive from you a report which will enable Her Majesty's Government to furnish you with definite instructions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) SALISBURY.

No. 37.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 543.)
Constantinople, November 26, 1885.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt, by messenger Callender, of your Lordship's despatch No. 432 of the 18th instant, inclosing copies of a letter addressed to you by Mr. Hagopian on the subject of the Armenian question, and of your reply to that application.

I shall certainly bear in mind your Lordship's instructions as conveyed to me in that despatch; but as matters now stand, I regret to have to say that I do not see the slightest prospect that that question could be brought forward at this Conference with the remotest chance of a discussion of it being accepted, as all the Powers appear determined to keep the Conference within the limits assigned to it by the invitation on which it has met.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 38.

Sir W. White to the Marquis of Salisbury.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 578.)
Constantinople, December 10, 1885.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward a copy of an interesting despatch from Mr. Consul Eldridge at Beyrout, pointing out that the distress already produced throughout the whole of Syria by the deficiency of grain and other crops is greatly intensified by the recent calling out of the Redifs and Reservists.

He anticipates great suffering and distress during the approaching winter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 38.

Consul-General Eldridge to Sir W. White.

(No. 47.)
Beyrout, November 14, 1885.

Sir,

I HAVE recently had the honour to report from time to time to your Excellency the departure from Beyrout of detachments for various ports to reinforce the Ottoman army.

I refrain from repeating the numbers and destinations of these men, as I am by no means certain that my information is quite accurate, though it is as nearly so as I am able to ascertain, while Mr. Consul Dickson, who, residing at the seat of the military administration of the vilayet, is naturally in possession of fuller information, has already furnished you with detailed reports on the subject.

During the last few weeks recruits for the present year and those for past years who have not been required to serve with the colours, reserve men, and Redifs, have been collected in various parts of Syria, and shipped off as transport has been available, without any attempt to organize them into battalions or even companies before their departure, and will, I presume, be drafted into the regimental *cadres* as they arrive at the various military centres.

Nearly all the men thus sent away from Syria are without arms or uniforms, which will have to be provided for them on arrival.

This hasty summons of the men available for military service is intensifying the distress already produced throughout the whole of Syria by the deficiency of the grain

and other crops. The rainfall last winter scarcely reached half the average, and during this autumn it has not been sufficient to enable a ploughshare to penetrate the sunbaked soil, so that the people who are summoned from their homes have to leave their fields untilled, their granaries empty, and their unfortunate families under the threat of imminent famine.

The accounts which reach me from different parts of Syria of the distress that already exists, and the still greater sufferings anticipated during the winter, are heartrending.

The complaints of the way in which the enrolment of reinforcements for the Turkish army is being affected are almost universal. Heavy bribes are exacted for exemption from those who can afford to pay, and those who are legally exempted are forced to take the places of such as are able to buy themselves off, and the officers who are intrusted with the duty of calling out and passing the men for active service are fast realizing handsome fortunes.

During the war with Russia the Redifs and reserves went to the front with a certain amount of willingness, and in some cases even with enthusiasm, as they had a tangible and a real enemy to fight; but in the present case much discontent prevails, as the lower and ignorant classes from which recruits are chiefly taken cannot understand what they are wanted for. One of the theories is that this augmentation of the Ottoman army is required for the purpose of driving the English out of Egypt, and other equally absurd rumours are set afloat to account for the present military measures.

The conclusions to which I arrive are, that in consequence of (1) the partial failure of the crops of the present year, (2) the want of rain at this season, and (3) the withdrawal for military purposes of the Moslem cultivators of the soil at the moment when their useful labour is most required, will cause great distress in this province during the ensuing winter, especially if it should happen to be a severe one, amongst the Moslem population, who cannot but feel discontented at being forced to abandon the cultivation of their lands through the withdrawal of their best men for a purpose which they fail to understand, while a natural sentiment of envy is awakened towards their Christian fellow subjects and the more fortunate inhabitants of the Lebanon who are exempt from military service.

My impression is, that the sufferings and discontent caused by the reasons above enumerated may not improbably lead to fanatical outbreaks in small outlying places, where the people are ignorant of the true causes and necessities of the present situation. I trust, however, that the stringent instructions received by the authorities of the vilayet from the Sublime Porte to exercise their utmost energy and discretion in maintaining order throughout the province, and to avert any complications which might increase the serious difficulties under which the Sultan's Government is already labouring, will be efficiently carried out, and, in so far as my experience of and influence in the country can minister towards promoting its tranquillity, I shall not fail to give my best assistance to the Ottoman authorities for the furtherance of those objects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. J. ELDRIDGE.

PUBLIC RECORDS F.O.